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So the World Goes!

J. W. SULLIVAN.

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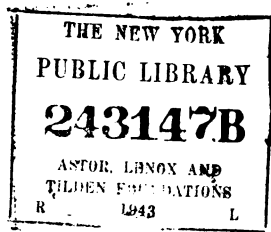
SO THE WORLD GOES

BY
J. W. SULLIVAN

Author of "Tenement Tales," "Direct Legislation," Etc



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Worcester 21 June 1943

An Outrage on Public Opinion.

It is about twenty years since I quit Grandfield. I left it for my own good. At full maturity now, whenever I am tempted to play social reformer, I turn over in my mind the events that led up to my departure from that Pacific Coast town.

I settled in Grandfield to share in its growth. I was to mount the social and financial ladder by sobriety, industry, honesty, and piety.

During my first year in Grandfield I formed the acquaintance of a young man named Fulton. A handsome, winning fellow, a society favorite, Fulton spent more money than his earnings allowed. Hence a habit of asking his friends for a loan.

One day Fulton came to me with a downcast air. He told me that not only was he obliged to put off paying his debts, but he must leave Grandfield.

I asked him the cause of this move. I saw he was much wrought up. After some hesitation he admitted that disgrace stared him in the face. He had been playing cards at the Deerfoot Club rooms, and had lost not only all his own money but a good deal he had borrowed. To go away, forswear betting, and start afresh elsewhere, this was the best he could do now.

Fulton left town, people wondering why he had

abandoned his prospects, which had been good. I often heard from him afterward. He proved true to his good resolutions. He never gambled again.

What this young friend of mine had passed through—succumbing to the allurements of gambling, losing his chances of getting on in business, being obliged to go away in debt, and exposing himself (as he told me) to the temptation of robbing his employer—all this made a deep impression on me. For months after Fulton's downfall he was in my thoughts. In Grandfield, I argued, there were other Fultons exposed to ruin through the Deerfoot Club—a mere gaming place, in fact. Was not a plain duty here before honest men? Ought not a movement to be started to break up every gambling den in Grandfield? Decidedly, yes.

I had lately been hearing of two sporting men in town named Sharp and Keep. The twain had come up from San Francisco within a year without a penny; they had since won almost a fortune. Beginning with fifty-cent bets at cards and billiards, they had gone on until they now staked hundreds of dollars a day on any and every game of hazard. The recognized leaders of their much-talked-of profession in Grandfield, they were about to set up a fine "club room" of their own. So gossip said.

The men about town who talked over the affairs of Sharp and Keep in my presence did it with an air that implied a certain admiration of these two sports. Some light-headed fellows seemed to feel even a pang of envy at their success. I remember demanding of one

chatterer if he found anything to respect in the character of these gamblers. He replied he certainly did. Both were generous and—and temperate. They were besides cool, sensible, enterprising fellows—thorough men of the world, exhibiting some of the best points in Western character.

In such praise I found additional grounds for my indignation against Messrs. Sharp and Keep. If they possessed any good traits, only the more outrageous was it that they should engage in fleecing their fellows and in sowing the seeds of vice in our community. That so-called reputable citizens should find any reason for tolerating their presence was astonishing. High time was it, indeed, to crush out Sharp and Keep. As I have said, in those days I was very young and new to the frontier.

While in this frame of mind, I found my attention attracted one day by a large new building in the business part of the town. I stopped to look at it. A passer-by of my acquaintance, a house-builder, halted a moment to tell me about the new structure. He had built it himself. The finishing touches had just been put on. The ground floor was for stores. The upper part, he said in a confidential whisper, had been fitted up for club rooms—the finest outside San Francisco. The building was Sharp & Keep's. They had paid the builder cash for everything. And as he left me he informed me that the games were to open that very night.

Grandfield was not a large place, yet up to that moment I had heard nothing of the proposed sinister

uses of the new building. I surmised, therefore, that few others could know of the opening that evening and that the attendance would be small. In that case, I myself might proceed at once to close the vile den. I could visit the rooms, select from the straggling lookers-on a witness or two, and, by persuasion or coercion, induce them to appear at court with me and testify against Sharp and Keep in the suit I should bring against those tempters and law-breakers.

That evening I went down town nerved to carry out my plan. I was confident; even gleeful. Success could hardly fail me. Should any church friend see me enter the gilded temple of vice, my character could suffer only until I had brought suit and closed the game. The martyr's pains before the martyr's crown! Besides, having now lived in Grandfield a year, I felt perfectly secure in my reputation. My merits had carried me above suspicion.

I strolled along on the opposite side of the street from the new building, reconnoitring. There was no glimmer of light from the windows. I crossed over and looked in at the main entrance, but not until then could I discover any sign of life within. But up in the second story flickered a single gaslight. I summoned my resolution and boldly mounted the broad stairway.

At the rear of the second floor hallway a bright light streamed through a transom. I went back to the door and for a moment listened. Within all was quiet. But on straining my attention I could at intervals hear a slight sound—a rattling and clicking—and the faint

murmur of low voices. Yes; a game was going on in there; the ivory "chips" were passing back and forth, and men were breathing their joys or their woes with the run of the play. The quiet that reigned strengthened my belief that only a few were present.

I tried the knob of the door; it turned. I opened the door and stepped inside. I found myself facing the length of a long, wide room. And there, crowded around a dozen great gaming tables, were at least a hundred of my fellow citizens of Grandfield!

Though many of the men knew me, much to my surprise not one greeted me. All were intently watching the game. Behind the tables sat the dealers. In making a play, a dealer drew from a deck several cards one after another and laid them on the table before him, and I could see that somehow loss or gain was determined by the order in which the cards turned up. The players bet by putting "chips" on certain spots or cards on the green table-cover. After each drawing of cards the dealer took up or put down "chips," as he had won or lost by the deal. Click, click, click, ticked the chips. Mutter, mutter, mutter, came from the players, some exulting, some growling. The dealers were much of one type—each wore the unruffled air of a bookkeeper at his desk.

As I have said, no one noticed me. Here were men growing richer or poorer, in an instant, as if by gift or by theft. No time had they for civilities. The stillness, the nervous clutching of their ivory counters by the players, the eager interest in the coming turn of the cards, the desperate look of some of the losers

—it was a scene the like of which I had never looked on before. What I could not account for at all was that I, a young man of my high character, could be in the room without the bare fact putting a stop to the game.

While I was occupied with these reflections a pleasant-faced man whom I had seen about town, but whom I did not know, invited me to "step into the refreshment room." He added: "You can take a hand in the game afterward." Me!

However, I was there for evidence. Passing through a short corridor, I found myself in a room in which, under a flood of gaslight, were tables with a lavish display of glass and silver ware, containing solid and liquid refreshment. Here I was greeted heartily by several acquaintances, who were helping themselves of the good things. No one seemed at all surprised at seeing me present. This pained me. Absence of wondering comment was an impeachment of my established reputation.

Men stood about in groups, eating, drinking, smoking, chatting. One asked me if the tiger had eaten me up in the jungle. Another wanted to know if I had been "cleaned out." I looked blank, but the fellows rattled on, bantering and laughing. They took it as a matter of course that I was there as one of them. And I a Sunday-school teacher!

I had been in the refreshment room but a moment when the crowd began pouring in from the gambling hall. The games had been suspended an hour for the formal "opening."

Now was my time to pick out my witnesses. Among those present were men I had never suspected of entering such a place and whose behavior grieved me deeply. It was a vulgar crowd. A coarse but hearty familiarity on the part of all leveled off every difference of social station.

A common, glib-tongued rowdy, with a hoarse voice, nominated for master of ceremonies "our distinguished fellow-citizen, ex-Judge Ward." The Judge was a brilliant lawyer, whom I had often heard called a rollicking blade without fully understanding the phrase. He was stout, red-faced, carelessly dressed, and had a hearty laugh, an unctuous manner, and a powerful voice. He set a chair upon a table, mounted the improvised platform, took a seat, and proclaimed himself chairman for the evening. Then he went on to make a speech that brought forth howls of delight from his audience. I remember he said, among other things, that Messrs. Sharp and Keep were the most public-spirited men in Grandfield, models for its business men. They were live, pushing, thoroughgoing. They were public benefactors indeed, for they prevented wealth from being hoarded; they kept money in circulation. By the erection of their elegant building they had given wages to labor and profits to capital. Grandfield was big enough to encourage enterprise in whatever shape it appeared. Sharp & Keep was a broad-gauge firm,—encouraging speculation; sending its cards to all; declaring spot cash dividends; tolerating every color, even red and black. It welcomed alike Moses (the Judge stuck out his thumb

toward a cheap clothing man) and Pharaoh (he pointed grinning toward the gaming tables) and the church (he leveled his index finger at me).

His horrifying drollery ended, the Judge announced a song "by a well-known vocalist." I was inexpressibly shocked on seeing the tenor of our choir make his way to the side of the chairman. He sang "California Gold" and finished amid great applause.

I was discouraged. This reckless crowd promised me few witnesses for law and order. I thought of going home. Indeed, I was edging my way out through the noisy throng when I heard the chairman shouting a wordy introduction for one whom he dubbed a rising young pilgrim—"one who could with equal grace teach in Sunday-school and pull the tiger's whiskers in his lair." And he called out my name!

The crowd made a lane for me to the chairman's table. After hesitating a moment, I walked up beside it, the air meanwhile rent with cheers, shrill whistling, and the racket of applauding hands and feet.

I faced the uproarious crowd. In those days I was a slender youth, smooth-faced and none too impressive in manner. For a moment I looked fixedly at the roysterers. When they became silent, I said, straining my thin, high voice:

"Gentlemen, I have never gambled in my life. (Enthusiastic cheers and uproarious ironical laughter.) I am proud to say I am a teacher in a Sunday-school. (Redoubled hilarity.) I have come to this wicked place to-night on a mission. (Snickers.) What I have seen here has strengthened my purpose. (Silence.) I

have been amazed at seeing certain men here gambling. (Inquiring looks.) If I can I am going to have this infernal den closed. (Excited murmurs.) My mission here is to get witnesses to appear in court against Sharp and Keep. (Hisses.) How many of you, true to your manhood, will stand up"——

A tumult drowned the rest. So many men started for me at once that they fell over one another. But I had noticed, off to one side, a doorway opening into the hall. For that doorway I made a dash, and gained the stairs and the street. With the speed of a deer I fled away to my boarding-house.

That night slumber evaded me. I was in a highly excited state of mind. Across my vision flitted again and again the scenes of the gambling den. What a revelation of human nature in its baseness it had been! What shocking greed, depravity, shamelessness! The stillness of the gaming hall, the boisterous horse-play in the refreshment room—how both told of nerves unstrung by the play! The face of every man in the crowd again stood out before me in the strong light, not one countenance natural. The horseplay, the carousing, the passions for drink and gaming—all helped to put devil's marks where there ought to have been the finer human lineaments.

In vain I wooed sleep. A score of plans for closing the den were contending in my mind. My temples throbbed, I tossed from right side to left, from face up to face down, from a curl-up to a sprawl, my arms and legs thumping the mattress. I was young. The weight of reform bore on me heavily.

Next morning I rose feverish and dumpy. The most guilty gambler could not have been more nervous after the night's revelings. A dread, too, had seized me. I had made enemies.

However, I had my plans perfected. I would wait on the editor of the local newspaper, and next on the Prosecuting Attorney, and thus at once bring to my side public opinion and the machinery of the law. The rest would be easy.

A copy of Grandfield's morning paper was lying on a chair in the dining room. I glanced it over. It contained a news article on the opening at Sharp & Keep's. Grandfield, the writer said, go-ahead in every respect, might be proud of the new sporting hall, a resort unrivaled outside San Francisco. Then followed a florid description of the gambling place. No mention was made of the games; but decorations, furniture, and refreshment tables were beautified again in print, Grandfield's innocents being led to suppose that Sharp & Keep's was simply a gentlemen's clubhouse, while the initiated reader could appreciate and chuckle at the writer's ingenuity and audacity. To call on the editor of that paper to help my reform, I saw, would hardly be worth while. In this impression I was confirmed when one of the boarders said that the notice had cost Sharp & Keep fifty cents a line.

But the law—the majestic, incorruptible law! Of the law I could be confident. It was on my side, surely. On going down town I dropped in at my place of employment, explained that I had important

business outside for an hour, and went direct to the Prosecuting Attorney's office. There a bland young clerk told me the attorney had been unexpectedly called that morning to San Francisco. The time of his return was uncertain. It did not occur to me then that my mission had anything to do with this lawyer's alleged business out of town. I had not yet had that experience with men which breeds haunting suspicions.

My way back to work took me by Judge Ward's office. The Judge, that jolly old reprobate, seeing me from a window, called me in. He shook my reluctant hand cordially and invited me into his back office—to have an eye-tooth sharpened, he said. He put me in a comfortable chair, seated himself square in front of me, looked me directly in the face, and with abounding good nature told me not to make an ass of myself. I was young and vealy, he kindly told me, and so he could almost forgive me. But I must come to my senses. Did I not know that if gambling was not carried on at a first-class, respectable place, like Sharp & Keep's, the lively boys of Grandfield would be driven into bad company in disreputable resorts? They must make their little ventures somewhere. Reformers like me must learn to take the world as it is and make the best of it. Did I not know that a high-toned place, such as Sharp & Keep's, helped to make Grandfield attractive? It was a magnet to teamsters, lumbermen, railroadmen and up-country miners. Did not their visits mean more wealth to Grandfield's hotels and merchants? Suppose the money-spending strang-

ers now in Grandfield should be driven out, they would go over to enrich its rival, Littlefield. Where would half our business be then? My own situation would perhaps soon be vacant. Worldly wisdom, young man, worldly wisdom! All well enough to have the church-going habit—but keep that for Sunday. Never, though, could the teeming masses of this big earth be measured by the little narrow tape-line of Sabbath school morality. Good day,—and better sense to me!

I returned to my bookkeeping, depressed. During the day, as I glanced out of my window from time to time, men in the street cast disdainful looks at me.

In the evening, on the way to my boarding house, I stopped in at the combined bookstore and post-office to make a purchase. While the salesman was looking for what I wanted, I stood waiting, screened by a high showcase from the body of the store. There a knot of men and half grown boys were cawing over some morsel of gossip. Some one, as I caught their talk, had gone to a gambling house somewhere, lost a pile of money, his employer's likely, and then had threatened to "squeal" on the gambling house proprietors. Who had done this dirty trick? asked a voice. I felt I should faint when, shouted out in chorus, I heard my own name.

At supper that evening, instead of the usual sociability among the boarders, there was an embarrassing silence. The cool atmosphere seemed chilliest about my table. I soon finished eating and went to my room. There I sat for a while in melancholy. By and by I found my gaze directed toward a photo-

graph on the mantel-piece. Ah, sweet girl! To her could I go for tender consolation, for the elixir of sympathy, for the inspiration of sweet hope! I put on my best apparel and wended my way to her home. As I approached the house I remembered that her father was an outfitting merchant whose dealings were chiefly with Grandfield's floating population. When passing through the front gateway I heard her at the piano—I knew all her tunes. But, in response to my ring, her father, a large, hard man, came to the door and gruffly said she was "not in."

The shock nearly stunned me. To recover, I went off on a long walk. An hour later I found myself a mile out of town tramping away in the dark like one mad. A voice hailed me asking if I was going to town. I answered yes. Then, it said, I was facing the wrong way; if I would turn about it would bear me company. Glad of a chance to escape from my distracting thoughts, I started back. The man turned out to be a young country fellow. He said he knew me by sight as one of the young men of Grandfield. The town boys, he was aware, were great sports. He himself was a "festive blood." He liked to make money and to win money. He was on his way to Sharp & Keep's new place to try his luck at play. By the way, he said, a rumor had floated out to the cross-roads grocery that at the opening the night before some fellow had won a heap of money, got drunk at the free blow-out, and then gone out and hunted up the police to stop the game. A man like that ought to be ducked in the river. If the boys would join in to do it, he would help. Wouldn't I, too?

The next day was the end of the month. When our office was about to close in the evening one of my employers called me up and told me the house would no longer require my services. Business was dull in Grandfield. Little wonder, my superior added, when overpious busy-bodies were forever meddling with the prosperity of the town. Some fools never knew when to leave well enough alone.

At supper, my fellow boarders were still icicles. I remember venturing to explain matters to a lady whose amiability I had thought perfection. But she cut me short. She said frankly that though there were many conflicting rumors, she did not care to learn the disgraceful truth. However, as a well-wisher of even the erring, she would suggest that I leave Grandfield. No young man could expect to visit notorious evil places habitually, revel in low company, discredit the church, and at the same time maintain a standing in society. Gracious heaven! What could people be saying of me?

The same day my landlady stiffly demanded my room, as several of her boarders intended leaving if I were not made to go.

Now, indeed, the truth sank into my mind. Leave Grandfield I must for my own good. Life there would be but a battle against false rumor and harassing suspicion. I had indeed made powerful enemies. I began to question whether, even among the "best" people, many were not tacitly in league with the sporting element, for the sake of business. With a heavy heart and a mind teeming with worldly-wise resolu-

tions, I packed my trunk. I walked to the railway station alone, and took the next train for San Francisco. I had not even the poor luxury of saying good-bye to a single soul in the town—that town in which I had hoped to become a leading citizen, through a self-sacrificing public spirit and a deserved reputation for morality.

Some years afterward I met the pleasant faced man who had played host in Sharp & Keep's. He knew me. He introduced himself to me as Sharp. He had dropped gambling, he said, and was now in a legitimate line, horse racing. Keep was in the penitentiary. The firm had gone up in Grandfield like a rocket and had come down like a stick. Embezzlements of clerks and cashiers occurring repeatedly, the business men had let the preachers loose, the vane of public opinion had taken a turn, and Sharp & Keep and the other gamblers and all the liquor men went down in one universal ruin. It was only what they deserved, he said. No professional gamblers were honest and no employé who gambled should be allowed to hold a position of trust. It was a good thing for him in the end, Sharp added. He was now doing well, legally.

"By the way," he continued, with an amused smile, "you're still a reformer, I suppose?"

I took him into my confidence. This I told him:

"From the date of that experience of mine in Grandfield to the present time I have never tried reform single-handed. The picket reformer invites misrepresentation, ridicule, detraction, hate. Reforms usually come piecemeal, in periodic spasms, in which the

sinner himself plays a leading part. Awaiting the coming upheaval, the reformer, having reformed himself, will do well to move along with men as smoothly as they will let him."

And the gambler replied: "True; and you and I are two wise men. You were far in advance of public opinion and practicable law; I was a little behind. You have retreated to the point where you find the masses; I have caught up with them."



The Foreman.

Having drummed up several new customers for our firm, I was sauntering back to my hotel, toward the close of the day, tired. Before me stretched a long street; the typical business street of a growing American city. On the sidewalks, crowds; in the roadway, heavy trucks, swift cars, swifter light wagons, a few carriages; on the house-fronts numerous signs, in black, white, gold, brass, of every form and lettering; at the curbs, high telegraph poles, topped with a network of wires. The blocks of houses were solid—a few of antiquated frame, yes, even thirty years old; many of brick, their style, of the last decade, already abandoned; others, the most striking, of steel and stone, the sky-scrapers that testify to the money the fortunate are coining. On all sides, hurry, dust, noise, the atmosphere of the lively dollar and mad pursuer. It was my first day in the place; but what matter? In this street any commercial traveler would be amid scenes and sounds familiar.

A very handsome sign, that, "Benfield & Johnson." Yes, I knew those names. Not in our line, however. Light machinery. I stopped to look. Doors and windows of broad plate glass, through which I saw into a long store-room glittering with a display of stock—

brass, iron, steel, the wheels and what not of fine machinery. At the right and rear an oak and ground glass partition, screening from view the counting department. At the left, just inside the door, a wide stairway, and at the foot, against the wall, a large square directory board for the offices of the upper floors. From where I was I could see up four flights of stairs to the top story, where, beyond a glass door and against a window light in the rear, were dimly defined revolving wheels and lathes—part of the gearing of a light machine shop. “Benfield & Johnson?” Why, to be sure, that was the firm Jimmy Debber had written me he was working for. I’d go up and see Jimmy.

I mounted the long stairways, thinking of Jimmy. At school he was one of our smart boys. When he entered as apprentice at the town foundry, people said he would turn out to be a great inventor. And when, three years later, he went off as a full hand to the city he was in high hopes for a great career. But somehow his inventions, if he ever had invented, had brought him no fortune. Time had now carried his life midway toward the allotted term, and in writing to me a year before Jimmy had told me he was still working for wages—“in a factory,” he confessed, with hopes and courage abated. And his wife, who had looked forward to being a rich inventor’s wife, was now something quite different, and conscious of the fact—with three little drawbacks to wealth and fine society.

It was a long climb to the top floor. There I found

the big glass door locked. Seeing men at work inside, here bending at lathes, there filing or hammering at benches, I tapped on the glass. The workman nearest, a shaggy bearded foreigner, unlocked the door.

"Does Jimmy Debber work here?" I asked.

Not even looking at me, the man jerked his head sidewise, a gesture I interpreted to signify that Jimmy was to be found further down the work room. I passed in, the begrimed and hairy mechanic banging the door and turning the key behind me.

A line of men standing at benches along each side of the room; a double line of men and benches down the middle; the benches shop-blackened; the floor strewn with iron scraps and chips; here and there upright machines, snapping, grinding, whirling; overhead, humming wheels, pulleys,—gearing.

Ah, there was Jimmy! Near a window, at a lathe, bending over a piece of iron-work. Tall, wiry, the same old Jimmy in outline; but much older looking, and thin. His curly locks streaked with gray. How sharp his features! The eyes mechanically watching his work spoke the pathos of fatigue over labor that had lost its interest.

"How are you Jimmy?" I said on nearing him.

The buzz in the shop partly drowned my voice. Jimmy looked up. His glance told that he had not heard what I said, and that he failed to recognize me. It told more. He had no pleasant greeting for strangers; he half resented the interruption.

I smiled and again said, "How are you, Jimmy?"

His expression changed.

"Why, George, how are you? I couldn't see you well; my eyes are tired out, following the fine tread of this steel screw. I am glad to see you."

But was he glad? He spoke in a droning voice; his smile was faint, his handshake feeble.

We talked. I noticed Jimmy glancing uneasily toward a desk at the end of the room, at which a severe looking man, with his coat on, was sitting.

A whistle blew. The machinery stopped running; the buzzing noises died away. The men were leaving their benches.

"Six o'clock!" announced Jimmy. "Wait a minute till I wash up."

While he was gone I walked slowly toward the glass door leading to the front stairs. It was closed. I was about to unlock it when a sharp voice said:

"Visitors to the hands go down the back stairs."

The speaker was the severe man at the desk.

Jimmy coming along, I made no reply. He led me to a back stairway. It was dark, narrow, precipitous; to each story there were several right-angle turns. It took us a dreary five minutes to fumble and grope our way down, a file of men who stumbled, swore, and shouted preceding us.

The stairway opened from a rear basement into a cross-alley. Darkness had come on. The sole light in the alley-way was one dim lantern hung above the door from which we made our egress. Slowly, over puddles and slippery flagstones, we picked our way, half a long block, to a side street.

Jimmy had begun complaining dolefully as we were leaving the shop. He had kept it up—on the stairs; along the alley; and now in the street.

It was a regular slave pen where he worked, he said. Was it not degrading to men of intelligence, such as those who had learned his trade, to be obliged to use back stairs? That sucker at the desk was a sort of deputy assistant foreman. To make himself solid with the head foreman, he always stayed five minutes after time. The humiliations of this back alley exit the men found harder to stand than their poor wages. The endless petty tyrannies of the shop were galling. The hands were forbidden to call out to one another while at work; though, of course, they were allowed to speak in an undertone;—the poor liberty of speech was yet permitted them. As a rule, the workmen were allowed to see visitors only ten minutes. But friends of the firm could come in and gaze by the half-hour at the men as if they were beasts in a menagerie; he had thought for a moment that I was one of the codfish aristocrats staring at him. Any man ten minutes late was docked an hour's pay. The head foreman sat up there at the desk during "short hours," with his coat on, doing next to nothing, except eyeing the men, who were hard at work. The firm, it was well known, was making money hand over fist; yet they paid the lowest wages going and held the noses of the men to the grindstone. The rules of the shop were endless. The front stairway had at one time been open to the men, but because one of them with a little beer aboard had gone asleep on

a landing one day, and tenants in the offices had complained, the crooked stairway had been built in back, and the front one closed to the hands. No one was allowed to stop and rest on this back stairway, though of course the hands were permitted to sit, like servants, at the head of the basement steps in the alley. Oh, if the men only were men, they'd walk out of such a place in a body!

After going part of my way, Jimmy shook hands with me and we parted. In bidding me good-bye he said he couldn't ask me to call and see his family; they were lodged in a tenement house, packed in with many other families; far, indeed, from the style he had once hoped to live in.

I walked to my hotel. The echo of a prolonged note in a minor key lingered with me. Jimmy Deber's thin voice was still translating to my mind his disappointments, his misfortunes, his broken spirit, his wretchedness, aye, his tortures in an earthly hell. And I could still see Jimmy as he had left me—moving away in the crowd, shabby in dress, nerveless in step, stooped in figure; dull, defeated, hopeless.

* * * * *

The next day I was in a Pullman car, bound homeward. Seated with me was an elderly gentleman, with whom I had fallen into a little traveler's chat the night before in the reading room of the hotel. Seeing each other on the train, we had spoken again, and were now quite well acquainted. After beating me at a game of cards he was in high spirits and ready to talk.

A daily paper lying open on the seat beside me told us in great display lines of another railroad strike. The old gentleman brought up the labor question. He had views. So had I. We agreed; and disagreed; and agreed to differ. Presently generalities gave way to particulars, and uncertain particulars to personal experience.

"Why, look here," said the old gentleman, whose way was kindly and genial, "just at this very moment my own business illustrates what I say—that good workmen are scarce. The foremanship in one of our factories is vacant; our old foreman died suddenly last night; and would you believe it, I don't know where to find the material for an average foreman?"

"Can't you appoint a relative?"

"Well; no. The man must have technical knowledge, and the youngsters belonging to us in the firm are above the business their fathers used to work at. Why, even our bookkeepers and upper salesmen look down on a man that takes off his coat and smuts his hands. No; no foreman material in that breed. We have to get a working man; want one that is sensible, honest, knows his business; can keep men at their work"—

I broke in:—

"Can estimate cost, save odds and ends, hire only the best workers, discharge the poor ones, employ no more than are needed, save the gaslight, maintain discipline, make the machinery do double service and last its full term, prevent waste of material"—

And the old gentleman added:—

"Is of good character, sober, industrious, intelligent, civil, lively, pushing, knows how to talk with energy to the men and be polite to visitors"—

And I took a turn again:—

"And doesn't want so much wages that he'll make more money than the firm?"

"Exactly," said the old gentleman. "Here we do agree."

"What's your business, might I ask?" said I, seeing him so frank and good natured.

"Light machinery," was the reply. "Benfield & Johnson. My name's Benfield—head of the house."

Like a flash I had an inspiration and formed a resolve. At desperate risks I would do a friend a good turn.

"Mr. Benfield," I said, "it's curious; I have an acquaintance working in your factory—the one in Vine street."

"Yes? Well; that's where my foreman was who fell dead last night."

"Well, sir; this man is an old schoolmate of mine, and I can recommend him. He knows his business, has worked some years in your factory, and I'm sure he can do the work you want done."

"So? Well, his best qualification is to have got the run of the shop; there's money in that for us. We people down stairs never know any of the hands except the foreman; can't bother about the men; they're always coming and going. You think this man'll suit us, eh?"

"I feel quite sure."

Mr. Benfield took down the name of James Debber in a note-book, and we passed on to other talk.

* * * * *

Two years later, and there I was in that lively business street again. My day done, I bethought me of Jimmy Debber. I had never heard from him meantime. I had felt some curiosity as to whether Mr. Benfield had made him foreman, but had not written to ask about it, because of Jimmy's sensitiveness. But now that I was here I could see Jimmy.

I passed along the cross street, into the narrow back alley, down the basement steps, and then worked my way up, up, the dark, ladder-like back stairway, to the fifth story. There was the shop,—gearing, benches, busy workers,—the picture I had seen two years before. One feature different. At the foreman's desk, with his coat on, sat Jimmy Debber.

It happened that the shaggy foreigner was close by me again. He stopped me. I explained I wished to see Mr. Debber. At that moment the deputy assistant foreman came up. The shaggy man, with an interested air, told him I wanted to see "Mr. Debar," and the two together took me to Jimmy's desk. Each looked pleased at his office of conductor of the friend of the foreman.

I saw at a glance that Jimmy had gained in girth. His head was carried high. His clothes were new.

"Ah! Mr. Fenton," he said, "how do you do?" His voice was full and round. And like his voice, the entire man had changed. Foreman Debar was self-con-

tained, deliberate, imposing. His greetings to me were at once charmingly condescending and cautiously genial.

In a few moments we had told each other in brief our stories for the two years. His recollection of my former visit was not very distinct.

"Let's see," he said. "Was I foreman when you were here before?"

"No."

"Well; it was about that time I was made foreman. I had been sure of the promotion for some time. When a man is a first-class workman, is sober, hard-working, and of fair general intelligence, he can safely reckon on success. He makes himself indispensable to his employers. Down stairs they"—the firm, I inferred—"seeing what I was capable of, awarded me my place, solely on my merits and without outside recommendation. Would you like to see the improvements I have made in the shop?"

"Yes."

"Just walk around with me."

We went down the long work room. He stopped me before a printed placard, nailed to the wall, "My rules," he said, with a wave of the hand.

The first was: "Positively no talking whatever allowed in working hours." The second: "No friends of the hands admitted during working hours." Another: "Hands five minutes late are laid off half a day." And so on. At the close was an N. B.: "Any hand disobeying any rule whatever will be instantly discharged."

As we passed by the men, they applied themselves closely to their work.

"Some are new hands?" I remarked.

"Yes; oh, yes! When I took charge, a clique of the old hands had to be convinced I was foreman. I straightway dismissed every man who showed the least disposition to dispute my will."

"What did the firm say?"

"Didn't know it, or if they did, didn't care. What they want is good work done cheap. And I give them that."

"Cheaper than the old foreman?"

"Yes, I've cut down all the wages twice in two years."

"Do you get good men?"

"Oh, these fellows are all of a pattern. It makes no difference what wages they earn; they never make good use of their money. I save expenses for our firm, too, by enforcing good care of the machinery."

"How?"

"Well, if a botch of a hand damages a machine I fine him. I introduced fines here. There are weeks when I fine a third of the hands, docking some botches twenty per cent. of their wages. It makes them careful, I tell you."

"What is your own especial work?"

"Well, all my time is taken up in planning, estimating, and—ah—superintending. My predecessor used to work at a bench when he could take the time, but I have decided there's no money in that for the firm. The foreman is here to see that the men do their work."

We came to a part of the shop where a gang of men were putting together a machine. The deputy assistant foreman was directing the job. Foreman Debar called out:

"Look out you don't bungle that. Billings, hold on tight to that bar! Jordan, don't stand there like a fool—take hold! Push in that brace, McGrath, and don't be afraid to use your muscle. What are you shirking for, Myers? I'll discharge you yet. What kind of men have we got to put up with nowadays, anyhow?"

We returned to the desk. A whistle blew. The whirring of the machinery ceased. The men, however, stayed about their places.

"Isn't it time to quit work?" I asked.

"Yes; but I make every man clean up his truck on his own time."

A while afterward the hands had disappeared in the blackness of the rear stairs. Foreman Debar and I went down by the well-lighted, wide front stairway.

He invited me to his house. Curious, I went. It was in the suburbs; a pretty place, an acre or so, with shade and fruit trees, and grass plots, flowerbeds, and a vegetable garden. A homelike cottage. His children were neat; his wife was cheerful and quite dressy.

"I have put all my savings into this place," said Foreman Debar, "and have it half paid for. I spend all my extra time fixing it up. I think I deserve getting along in this world; at the shop I put in my best work for my employers, and at home I do the best I can for my family."

I took dinner with him; his table was well supplied. He conducted me through his house, pleased to show it; it was nicely furnished and in good order.

When I came away, he gave me his card, that I might not forget his address. The card read: J. Madison DeBar. And down in the left hand corner, "Superintendent, Benfield & Johnson."

* * * * *

Two days afterward, I was on my way home again. Looking over a morning paper in the train, my eye fell on this paragraph:

"The employés of the factory of Benfield & Johnson, in Vine street, struck yesterday against the foreman, J. M. Debber. They complain bitterly of his tyrannical disposition, and it is said the feeling against him on the part of the working classes throughout the city is that of universal detestation. Messrs. Benfield & Johnson both say they will leave their factory closed for some time. They have a surplus of stock on hand. As to the fate of Foreman Debber they are indifferent. It is hinted that Debber took advantage of his place to sell material from the factory, investing the proceeds in real estate in the suburbs."

The rest of that day I passed much time in reflection.

The Intricacies of Laissez-Faire.

A cousin of mine, a bright young woman, not long home from Europe, where she had lived ten years or more, made a call with me a few days ago on an uncle of ours, a fine old gentleman who lived on Washington Square. What took place during the call makes a bit of a story.

The reception room into which we were shown was sumptuously furnished, our usher a negro in black broadcloth. On admitting us his darkeyship bowed suavely, and in bidding us be seated he waved his hand with a courtly grace.

In a little while my uncle came in. I introduced my cousin. His greeting to her was affable. He saw in her a simply dressed young woman, with plain features. She saw in him a man of imposing physique, with a distinguished air—three score and ten, well preserved, silver-haired, pink-faced, his manner self-contentment itself.

He "broke the ice" with some smooth little conventional ceremonies. As to the young woman's personality he showed no curiosity. He meant to treat her amiably and forget her easily. If she, on her part, entertained any intention of looking behind his manner into his mind, she veiled the purpose behind her bright eyes.

Polite salutations over and duty done as to health and weather topics, the old gentleman, in his deep, well modulated tones, began "make-talk:"

"Tell me, my dear, what pleased you most abroad."

After some pause she replied soberly:

"Well, uncle, I was most pleased with life as I saw it in a Swiss commune."

"Indeed! what so pleasing there?"

"Not a soul in fear of pauperism."

"Ah, is it possible?" He smiled. "Well, I expected to hear something from you about cathedrals and the old masters, or the modern French pictures now so much in vogue, or perhaps the Paris boulevards; and here you introduce the Swiss peasantry. No one in dread of poverty! That's interesting. And how do they manage it?"

"The land of the commune, though poor and lying high in the mountans, belongs to everybody, or rather to nobody. To each family is allotted pasturage for cattle, trees for fuel or timber, and an acre or so of land for grain and garden. Food enough is raised for all. The rent of the hotels erected by the commune is also divided among the people."

"Indeed? Ah! B-u-t—but in all this are there not grave drawbacks to individual enterprise?"

"I don't know, sir. All dwell in comfort; the grown people can read and write; the children attend school; there is little crime; no one is idle, no one overworked."

"A land system like that might answer in a small primitive country. But it would never do here. You

know, my dear, that in this great, free American Republic nothing is left to the government that can be done by individuals. That government is best, we say, which governs least. Americans would never tolerate a paternal government. Let grit and manhood and enterprise win; here is freedom for all; no restrictions are to be placed on the right of property. It may be very well in a Swiss commune for everybody to own the land, but in New York if a man seeks undisputed ownership in his improvements he must own the land they are made on. Let every American be free to come and go as he likes, and if he can't take care of himself that's his own misfortune: there you have the essence of Americanism. The duties of the State should be confined strictly to protecting life and property. True American doctrine, this, and look at the magnificent country we have built up."

The old gentleman's sentiments were delivered with emphasis. His manner was impressive, his words deliberate.

"Yes, uncle." To the niece the topic was worked out.

"Have you seen the Brooklyn Bridge?" asked my uncle. "We consider it one of the wonders of the world."

"I saw it from the steamer," replied the niece, "as we came up the bay. There was a discussion among the passengers about its ownership. Some thought that a rich railroad man, Vanderbilt, owned it, as well as the elevated roads. Others said it belonged

to the governments of New York and Brooklyn. But from what you tell me, uncle, I see now it couldn't be owned by any government."

"Oh, ah! There is a—ah—a distinction to be made here. The enormous cost of the bridge put its construction beyond the reach of private enterprise—and it was built by the two cities."

The old gentleman was a trifle perturbed by his seeming self-contradiction. The young lady, observing the fact, looked out of the window and remarked:

"That is a beautiful park. What is it called?"

"Washington Square. Yes; a grand old park. Our city government has provided us with none finer, excepting, of course, Central Park, which cost many million dollars. You have seen Central Park, I presume? Nothing in Europe compares with it. It's a great public work."

The niece, again reflective for a moment, inquired:

"Uncle, what are some of the great private enterprises of New York?"

"Well, the big stores, the elevated roads,—and—and, well, the gas supply."

"The railroads and the gas supply, I presume, have furnished a good field for the enterprise of brainy individuals?"

"The enterprise of rascals!" exclaimed the old gentleman, warmly. "There ought to be some remedy for the way they plunder the public."

Once more the niece was thoughtful. There was a rap at the door and the negro servant appeared with a letter. Taking the letter and adjusting his spec-

tacles, the old gentleman asked to be excused if he read it. Before beginning, however, he directed the servant to bring in some fruit. Glancing at the postmark, he observed:

"Now, that's quick work. This letter was mailed but four hours ago in Albany, one hundred and fifty miles from New York, and here it is. What a blessing that the post-office is not in the hands of irresponsible corporations, like the telegraph."

After reading the letter, he said:

"I have been much interested in the fate of a young man who was taken ill with a contagious fever at his home. The health officers ordered his removal to an isolated city hospital. This letter informs me he is convalescent."

"Poor fellow," responded the niece. "Why, how comes it he was taken away from his friends during a critical illness?"

"Well, the health and safety of the community must be guarded above all else. In case of contagious disease, society obviously has the larger interest at stake. There the individual's ordinary rights must give way to the general good."

The negro servant entered, bringing the fruit and a pitcher of water.

"I am told you have such good water in New York?" remarked the young woman, inquiringly.

"We have a good supply of pure, wholesome water," was the answer. "But I can remember what bad water we had before the Croton aqueduct was built—by the city. Our aqueducts," the uncle continued, "are

works of which New Yorkers are justly proud. They cost the city government forty million dollars."

"The city government?"

"Y—e—e—s."

The normal pink of the old gentleman's face deepened toward crimson. He was silent for a moment. Then, as if to divert the course of the talk, he said:

"Taste one of these apples. We get them in Jefferson Market, close by here, from a man with whom I have dealt for many years. The market is a great convenience. At it we can buy meat, fruit, butter, and vegetables, all at the one place, instead of running about to various shops. The food there is inspected by the city market officers."

"Do all the dealers of the market have their stock in one large hall?" asked the niece.

"Yes. You know the city owns the market and—and—and—"

There was nothing in the niece's blank look to make the old gentleman hesitate and gradually lose his words, but he did.

The colored man came in and handed my uncle a newspaper. The old gentleman said to us:

"Jim knows the news before I do. I believe he reads the whole paper on the way here from the newsstand. Well, I see by the head lines there is little going on."

When Jim had gone, the niece said:

"I saw very few black people abroad, uncle, and I am somewhat curious regarding them."

"Yes? Well, Jim, here, is a likely fellow. He's

from the South, was brought here when a boy, after the war, by my son."

"Where did he learn to read?"

"In the public schools."

"What are public schools? Pardon my questions. You know I'm not American by education, and I am really ignorant of much that everybody here knows."

"Well, the common schools are one of the finest institutions of our government. They give to every child the education necessary to make him an intelligent voter."

"That seems to me admirable. Beyond doubt, uncle, but for the fostering care of the schools—maintained by your government—that poor black man would have grown up in ignorance. I have been in countries in Europe where the poor are denied the blessings of education."

"Yes, our common schools form an inestimable boon to the poor. It is principally because of these schools that our country is without its equal on the earth. Our forefathers bequeathed us indeed a good government, and our heroes of the civil war preserved its institutions at the cost of much blood and treasure. I think with pride of the triumphs of our late war, though it cost my son, the colonel, his life."

"How was he killed?"

"He was crushed between two passenger cars while taking drafted men to the front, and though he lived for some years afterward, he never fully recovered from his injuries."

"What are drafted men, uncle?"

"When the war had lasted two years it was found necessary to draft—that is, to conscript—men for the army. The government being in peril, it was bound to preserve itself, even at the sacrifice of the personal liberty of many of its citizens."

"What! Men were dragged from their homes and forced into battle? That seems terrible! Were many treated so?"

"Aye, half a million of them. And it was only right! Of what account were their liberties, or the lives of the quarter of them who were killed, when the government itself was to be saved? Can any man set up individual claims against the State when it is struggling for its existence? Where the happiness of all is concerned, what matters the life of one man, or even of a thousand?"

"I agree with you, uncle," said the niece, dryly.

"Ah, my son, the colonel! He was a brave soldier. When he came home, seeing his days were numbered, I sought a quiet house where he would be undisturbed. So I leased this one, and here he passed away. I like this place so well that I have stayed here ever since."

"It is a beautiful home, uncle. I should think you would prefer this locality to almost any other in New York—at least, to any I have seen."

"Yes; the advantages in living here are considerable. I did think at one time of buying a house in Fifth avenue; in fact I was ready to draw my check for one, when my lawyer warned me that the title to its lot was doubtful. But I am assured of undisturbed

possession of this house for the rest of my life. It stands on Snug Harbor land; I lease the house from its owner, who leases the lot from Snug Harbor—an institution whose title to the land is clear for a century or more. The lease for the lot is for forty years to come—as long as I expect to live, and maybe a little longer. The rent is low, as property goes nowadays. I myself make the repairs, and, being careful, I can call the place a bargain to me.”

“Yes, uncle, but it seems so complicated.”

“Not at all,” explained the uncle benevolently, “when you understand it. Each party in this transaction is sure of getting his own. Why, last year I put two thousand dollars on this house in improvements, of which I, or my family after me, will enjoy the benefit of every dollar.”

“Then to secure one’s improvements it is not necessary to own the land, or even the house? I think the Swiss in the commune where I lived hold the same principle.”

“But—but—there is a difference—a great difference.”

“Pardon me, uncle. Please tell me—I have a taste for such questions—though, of course, I could not presume to debate them with you—please assist me in seeing the difference, for example, between the situation of the owner of this house, as a land tenant, and the lessee of a Swiss hotel, as the commune’s tenant?”

“Eh? Well, ah, yes. Well, are the inhabitants of that commune honest?”

"Honesty with the Swiss is a national trait."

"Is their government stable—likely to last?"

"It dates back six hundred years."

"Well, I suppose those hotel men are safe enough. I should like to have a talk with some of the leading men of that commune. However, I don't like the word commune—sounds like dynamite."

"You will have to visit the Swiss to see them, uncle; for few of them emigrate. They are happy at home."

"I heartily wish more of the Europeans were, then. Our work-people here, in whom I have a deep interest, would be better off if foreign paupers were kept out of the country. For forty years I have been a protectionist, but with this flood of pauper labor from abroad our work-people have no protection."

"The tariff! That reminds me of the amusing things I heard on our steamer about smuggling. Almost every passenger was a smuggler. You can buy many articles abroad cheaper than in America. Uncle, why cannot Americans send orders over to Europe and get those things cheap? I do not quite understand it."

"The tariff stands in the way. Our government fosters our own industries. It cannot allow our people to patronize the cheap markets of Europe, to the detriment of home manufacturers."

"But, liberty? Does not your anti-paternal government force consumers to pay higher prices for certain goods than they would if free to buy where they could?"

"Well—my child, that's opening up problems that have balked statesmen."

and in asserting that it is the American policy to leave to individual enterprise"—

The old gentleman had been eyeing her with ponderous dignity.

"Certainly not," he interrupted. "I trust I have said nothing inconsistent with the strong anti-paternal principles I have held for sixty years."

We bade him good-day. As the niece shook hands with the old gentleman, I recalled their introduction half an hour previous. Since then, the first impressions of each other had evidently been undergoing a change.

The niece and I walked away from the mansion and under the elms in the square. She was silent. I was reflecting on her interview with the old gentleman.

We sat down on a park bench. After a while she turned toward me, looked soberly into my face for a moment and then laughed—as heartily as the place permitted. She burst out:

"Dear old man! He wouldn't admit he was jesting. But his talk was all a joke. Principles! Freedom! Anti-paternalism! Consistency? How well he kept it up! It was all his joke! But what a preposterous joke!"

The Wind.

I HELPFULNESS.

"Father, how well our house is sheltered from the wind!"

"And not by accident, daughter."

"No? Well, one might believe that Uncle Edward's house was exposed to the wind by design. I rode over there this morning on one of the cow-ponies, and on the way the wind was no more than a pleasant breeze. But when I got up the long hill and reached uncle's front door, I was nearly blown from my saddle. That house of his stands exposed to every blast, no matter from what quarter it blows."

That's true. When I came to Montana last spring, and stayed at your Uncle Edward's while looking for a ranch, I found he had a fine view. That was his object when he built where he is. But the spot is indeed exposed. The wind harasses the house like a malicious enemy. It breaks windows, tears off shutters, and carries tubs and barrels away, to send them bounding and whirling over the plain. It whistles through cracks and key-holes. Even penetrating the crevice under the front door, it lifts the hallway carpet in a series of ripples. During a storm, blasts in succession strike the house, as huge waves beat on a

ship at sea, and cause the bed one lies in at night to tremble at every shock. Flying twigs and fine sand pelt the walls like raindrops. And the screeches of the night-wind are uncanny!"

"But, father, we have nothing of the kind here at our own house. On our way west mother and I heard much about the terrific winds of this country of mountain and plain; but during the three days we have been here only a shifting, light breeze has played about the building."

"True. In so placing the house as to avoid the rough winds I have had success. Stand here by this window and I will explain how. You see, on this south side the trees have been cleared away for a hundred feet or more. We are thus open for the cool south and southwest breezes in summer. But around on our north side the big pines and firs, close to the house, shelter us from the wintry winds. And, you see, some miles away, through the clear air to the southwest, that precipitous mountain, that gigantic wall of gray crags and upright boulders? That's Honeycomb. Well, Honeycomb helps shield us from the damp winds in the rainy season. And Black mountain, on the west and northwest—ranging off north from Honeycomb—that's our Titan's buckler in the blizzard season."

"Such things, father, never before entered my mind."

"No; likely not. But in this region man's ingenuity must master the wind, always fickle, as it is—at times merciless, at others beneficent. In building on this spot I have managed both to escape from the

wind in its stormy spells, and to take advantage of it in its gentler moods. Back East you have seen street idlers grouped on the sunny side of a board fence seeking shelter from a chilly wind. Tall Honeycomb and great old Black mountain are to us our friendly fences."

"It's a pity, father, that you can't go on and employ the wind as a great mechanical force."

"Oh, I'm satisfied here with avoiding the ferocious powers of the monster."

"Father, away up on the side of Black mountain I see a little cabin. How the wind must blow on that high, bare spot."

"Yes. Perry's widow lives there with her two children. I expect to see that cabin blown down some day. The railroad tie-cutters stripped away the only windbreak that protected it—there where you see the fresh tree stumps, still further up the mountain side."

"Poor woman!"

"The destruction of the poor is their poverty. Perry, having nothing, squatted up on that bleak spot; it was the only place he could pitch his cabin without price. By the way, the wind killed Perry, too."

"The wind! how?"

"Oh, a tree he was cutting down was swung about by cross-winds and fell on him."

"Poor man!"

"And up there they live, the widow and her children. The little ones, I suppose, think it but natural that the wind should forever threaten their cabin and add to their miseries. Imagine little Johnny Perry

staring bewildered were you to tell him the wind could be avoided, checked, or controlled. Nor can Widow Perry herself understand, for instance, wind effects on climate or forest influences on the winds. I dare say, though, that the woman's happiest moments are spent in the open air on the leeward side of her cabin in the sunshine. Yet she sees no principle, either of nature or for science, in her cabin having a sunny, leeward side. The sight of sails and rudder guiding great ships in the teeth of the wind would suggest nothing to her. Her mind would fail to expand to any theories whatsoever on seeing commerce availing itself of trade winds; or strips of health-resort seabeaches exposed southerly and sheltered by hills from the wind; or on hearing of Sahara's scorching breath tempering the winds of the high Alps; or on learning that the tropical winds hover above the Japanese current thousands of miles across the Pacific, to be at last converted into the chill blasts which shake her little cabin on the mountain. No; such things are not in her philosophy."

"No more, I suppose, than are theories of government and economics or plans for forestalling large wealth."

"She's of the poor and ignorant who can only toil and earn scant wages. She's groping through the world. She prays for hard work, with no thought that men live whose sole scheme is to avoid labor and to profit by the work of others, as I have planned to get both cover and comfort from the wind."

"I suppose the well-to-do here are good to that poor woman?"

"Oh, yes. They give her a few surplus crumbs in charity. But will that place her above wretchedness? She needs shelter from the hurricane that forever blows up where she lives among the rocks."

"I see much that your words imply."

"I enlist nature in my services; Widow Perry is nature's plaything. Men who do as I do, live; she and her kind die. I am of the fit; she is of the unfit. The theologians call my kind godly, hers ungodly."

II. HELPLESSNESS.

"Mother, how far yet is it home?"

"Two hours' walk, Johnnie."

"That's an hour an' a half down the cañon, and half an hour up Black mountain, ain't it, mother?"

"About that."

"Let's rest here on the bridge a minute, won't you, mother?"

"Yes, children."

"Oh, mother! Look'ee 'way down the cañon, high up like, an' out on the plains. You can see that 'ere new house of 'em Easterners. See its red roof and the second story like a fancy pigeon coop?"

"Yes; they're rich."

"But you can't see down through the cañon along the creek. How many times does the road turn?"

"I don't know, Johnnie. As many times as the creek turns."

"Mother, hear the creek gurgle. Say, Kitty, how many mountain tops kin you see?"

"One, two, three, four, five on the near side, and Black mountain on that other side."

"But you can't see Honeycomb. That's round on the side of Black mountain, that faces them tender-feet's house."

"No, Johnnie, we can't see it."

"Well, say, Kitty, what shape is that mountain you counted one?"

"That's a sugar-loaf mountain. It's Whaley's mountain, and Mr. Whaley's ranch is at the foot."

"And I know the next one. That's Mount Tom. That's a peak-ed mountain."

"Yes; and the third one—that's Snow mountain. That's dome-shaped, they call it."

"And the fourth one, that's Man-Head mountain, Kitty, 'cause it looks like a great big man's head."

"An' the last on that side out next the plains they call Hogback, for it has bristles on the top, like a hog."

"Oh, Kitty! Just see! Black mountain looks like a big elephant. Back up the cañon, there's his big thighs, and here's his big fat body all along down the cañon, and there's his big head, 'way, 'way up high, back over our cabin."

"Come children; get your bundles and start. The wind's a-beginning to blow."

"Oh, I hate the wind, mother."

"Hurry home, then, and get under shelter."

Down the cañon road Widow Perry and her two little children trudged. The wind increased gradually. A storm was coming. Its approach was an-

nounced by a gentle sighing in the pines. Then here and there a slight puff of dust on the wagon road showed little wind swirls at work. The tree tops soon began to bend and sway, their sighs deepening to moans that at moments drowned the gurgle of Wolf Creek. Where the mountain side near by was bare the short grass fluttered in ripples, and the tall weed-stalks bent to the earth, to swing nimbly erect again.

The little party made haste. The children were silent. The widow set the pace. Kitty, with a light bundle, was close behind her. Johnnie, with a heavier one, brought up the rear.

A few minutes afterward the wild tumult of a wind storm was upon them. In every direction the tree tops whipped right and left, caught in counter-currents. Branches and bushes bowed and tossed before the blasts, their leaves fluttering wildly. Tall trees along the road bent over until it seemed they must snap off, perhaps to crush the little party. Fierce wind waves beat the herbage flat. Pebbles, dislodged from the heights, danced down the steep hillsides into the creek. The wind-whipped surface of the water broke into ripple, wave, and spray. Dry leaves in clouds, with rotten twigs, whirled down the cañon. Some big leaves, caught in upward courses, circled aloft, to lodge among the rocks. High on a peak a great pine broke off at the trunk, with a cannon-like report. A broken-winged bird was swept along, skimming the ground. The only living thing the little party saw, its fate terrified them.

The noises seemed of another world. The high-

walled cañon had become a colossal trumpet, blown by the great wind-god himself. Its prolonged notes, deep and hoarse and harsh, would have drowned a cathedral organ, even in its most sonorous peal. At each instant, with the shifting of the wind, new noises dominated. Now the forest trees were shrieking loudest, now the ravines, in succession, roared highest, now in the high rocks arose a piercing sibilation, now up along the precipitous peaks echoes boomed and resounded far away. Withal, intermingled, were howlings, swishings, bellowings and strange composite sounds, for which imagination could never coin words.

Little Johnnie's heart fluttered as he trudged along, panting, behind his mother and sister. In fear of trees and falling rocks, he was in greater fear of the terrible unseen beings that might nab him. Terrified as he was, and his infant mind filled with tales of genii and other men of fable—the beings who in combat throw mountains at one another—he peopled the cañon and the air above with those unearthly enemies of boys and with hobgoblins of his own fancy. He half expected some giant's awful head to rise above the crest of Black mountain, and he knew that there are giants with only one eye, an evil one, who discordantly pipe with horrid devils' mouths on hollowed pine-tree trunks. An unearthly and persistent bellowing from Whaley's peak made the boy look back, certain of seeing no less thing than the colossal calf the cowboys had told him of—that calf bigger than a whole mountain, which had cut out the ravines with

its hoofs and ripped up Wolf Creek cañon itself with its mighty nose-horn. How his nerves quivered when a lone oak behind him suddenly shrieked at him in human voice; and how his heart quaked when for a full minute a stentor chorus rose above all the other noises in the thunderous din! That group of stentors lived back at the head of Wolf Creek cañon, and now they were marching swiftly down after him, to carry him off to an eternity of frightenings. Johnnie called to his mother and sister, but his feeble pipe was lost in the roar. They seemed only bent on reaching home. When they had looked back at him last, both were pale and their lips were set.

At length the toilsome tramp down the cañon and the weary climb up to the cabin were finished. It had grown dark. The widow, afraid to make a fire, gave the children cold scraps for supper. They munched for a while in silence. Then the mother lighted a lantern, put it on the table, and took a seat in the big chair near the chimney. The children climbed on her lap; one sat on each knee.

"God help the poor people who are out on the mountains this night," she moaned.

"Who's out to-night, mother?" cried Johnnie, against the outer turmoil.

"I don't know, my boy, but only the poor, that's certain."

"The cowboys?" asked Johnnie.

"They're not in the mountains," cried Kitty; "they're out on the plains."

"Mother, ain't we the poor?" asked Johnnie.

"Yes; the poorest among the poor."

"Ain't there no way not to be poor?"

"No way for us."

"And ain't there no way to kill the wind?"

"Kill the wind? Johnnie! No; God sends the wind."

"But we might 'a' been killed by the wind."

"Providence took care of us, children."

"Ain't it roaring awful outside, mother?" whimpered Johnnie.

"Mother!" shrieked Kitty. "I'm afraid—everything is trembling so! Mother! Mother! The whole earth is shaking!"

"Mother!" screamed Johnnie; "hear the awful crash!"

"Heaven have mercy on us, my children! Oh, heaven have mercy on us!"

* * * * *

Next morning early a knot of frontier people on horseback were gathered on the road at the foot of Black mountain and gazing up the steep toward where the cabin of the Widow Perry had stood. High up near the crest began an enormous gash, from the lower end of which what looked like a prodigious mine-dump extended down almost to the road. At the upper end of the gash the wind had overturned up the earth. This had caused a landslide, and every trace of the cabin was obliterated.

Lord and Serf.

By the time I had been dealing with my little German shoemaker ten years I thought I knew him. I had heard from his own lips the main facts of his life, I had observed his habits, which were hardly more than to work, to eat, and to sleep, and I had learned to see pretty clearly into his mind—whatever mind he had. I was sure I knew him as a shoemaker. He made me an honest shoe, though every pair pinched me in the breaking in. Barring my fault finding with his tight fits, our relations were pleasant. (I paid him cash.) In calling at his shop, to have him take my measure or look to my mending, I came to expect him to talk a bit. He was dull. He entered upon few topics—the “wetter,” “bolitics,” and “der olt gontry.” Beyond these he seldom ventured. So in time I felt that I knew him.

In this shoemaker's character I observed one little kink. He betrayed it in his bearing toward his single assistant. Though this kink at times amused me, whatever its effect on the “jour,” I cannot say that in the course of years I ever gave it a second thought. But there came a time when this barely noticeable trait developed until it overshadowed everything else in the man's moral make-up. When I now catch

myself saying I know such and such a man—or woman—I recall this shoemaker.

The shop was small. When the two men were at work, the "boss," Fritz, sat on a low cobbler's bench facing Jake, his "jour," who sat on a bench even lower. Fritz was stumpy, harsh-featured, and black-haired; Jake was very stumpy, atrociously harsh-featured and yellow-haired. The two heated their bits of wax and their rubbing irons at a gas-jet that hung low between them. This jet, as I recall the shop, which I usually saw in the evening, was the only light in the place. Its tin reflector cast a shadow on the walls and ceiling and shed a broad shaft of light down on the men's work. Up in the half darkness, leather hung on the walls and rows of old lasts lay on dusty shelves. On the ceiling, which was cracked and smoked, one could indistinctly make out black bugs crawling where the funnel of rays from the top of the reflector played.

The "boss," as he sat at his bench, had three attitudes. The first, the habitual one, was leaning intently far over his work, even while talking. The second, an occasional one, was leaning toward his customer, whom he uniformly addressed obsequiously. The third, not an infrequent one, was leaning backward, his head high in the air, while he berated his "jour." Lording it over Jake was Fritz's "kink."

As for the "jour," he had but one attitude. Morn, noon and night he leaned forward over his work, a picture of the spiritless drudge. It was years after I began going to the shop before I heard his voice. He hadn't spunk enough to speak while customers

were in. He may have been backward, too, because of his slight knowledge of English. Never had I seen a "greenhorn" so raw.

It was curious to see this "jour" instantly regaining his bent-over attitude if he ever found himself sitting erect for one moment;—his head going down and his back curving out as if jerked into place by springs. Once when I saw him on the street I noticed he was round-shouldered by bench habit and head-bent through humbleness.

The first time I ever heard Jake, the "jour," speak he timidly filled in a point of information Fritz had passed over in explaining some trade secret to me. In return, Fritz glared at him, contradicted him, and snuffed him out instantly and effectually.

This domineering of "jour" by "boss," this one trait not in keeping with the character of my plain, hardworking shoemaker, I dismissed, as I have said, without attention. It never hurt me. I took it to be a class, or racial, or mere trade characteristic, in which the two understood each other.

A full decade had Fritz been my shoemaker when one day he sprang a surprise on me. He was, he announced, going into another business. What did I think of that?

"Going to quit the shop? I'm sorry."

"No! I make dwo piznesses."

"Look out, Fritz! two may be one too many. One ship, one captain, you know."

"Pzhaw! You mans vot ton't try pizness yourselfs, you afrait. I not! Blenty big mans make dwo

piznesses. Johnsy Depew, dot's de piggest lawyer apout, he's bresident New York railroat, unt der kreatest speech bolitician in der whole State pesides. Und dot Kronweiss, de prewer, he sell real estett, doo, und he got bropperty awlso. Und dere's—dere's—vell, enny amount o' mens—odder pig mens—in dwo, dree, seex piznesses. You don'd understand pizness, Meester Lester. Put I—vell, I vos in pizness, unt I know ut all!"

Fritz's feeling in this matter was strong. So strong that for the moment he forgot his accustomed show of deference to me.

"Nothing ventured nothing gained!" I said, lightly.

"Yah—yess! You zee how 'tis. Dot Captain you seen here pefore—heem's canal poat Captain. Vell, he make a fentilator on der poat by umself. Mit dot fentilator me unt heem'll kit a batent on, unt monafatter, unt sell vine pig vons t'ousant tollar each von. Sell um q-vick."

"Where?"

"By all der pig hotels, und der pi^o churches, efery t'eatre in t'e zeety, aferyveres apout in de pig awfiz housses." Then, significantly: "Unt—der—stocgk—in—Vall—streed! Dere, now, you kot der whole schgeme."

"What profit on each ventilator?"

"Eighd hunter tollar!"

Perhaps I looked my doubts. Fritz argued, loudly:

"You ton't haf no itee how much some beeples t'inks on fentilation. Dey villen to bay t'ousant tollar any times to have't goot. Efen brivate beeples—

schentlemen beeples. Now, you're a kint o' schentlemans—dot's all righd!—putt I means a real schentlemans, mit money. Dot feller bay much money vor vresh air in hees house. Ve fellers vot works, ve know 'tain't much differenz 'pout air. Putt, dem vine volks dey vant t'eir air vine, doo."

"How many ventilators do you expect to sell?"

"Ot leasd fife hundret in fife year. Den more!"

Had the sale money been in Fritz's pocket his self-satisfied look could not have been improved.

"But"—

"Ach!" his tone bordering on the one he employed with Jake. "Dere ain'd no m-putts. You beeples vot ain'd in pizness ton't know. I know. Vy, young man, look't t'e Pell delevone infentor. Ten year ako a poor tev'l uf a teacher, like you. Now wort' hundert million! Look't t'e man't 'fented t'e air prake—kot seffen t'ousant mens a-makin' 'um oud by Beetsburk, unt wort' twenty million heeself alretty. Ach! you employet beeples don't kot no iteer pizness."

Fritz was worth a million dollars in his mind. Already ordinary men were small beside him.

Jake, the "jour," suggested in an undertone:

"Tellum 'pout der von yer makin'."

Fritz's head went up and far back.

"Now, would ye mint yer own pizness?" he cried.

"You're nuddin' put a meddlin' Tchaik. Putton op yer mout. Ko, kit on mit yer vork."

Then to me:

"Vell, I—I ton't mint a-leddin' you in der segret. Ve're makin' von now by expeer'ment. Dis first von'll

gost t'ousan' tollar—kos it's expeer'ment."

Another man now entered the shop. He was slouchily dressed—his clothes a faded blue, his headgear an old yachting cap.

"Dees mine bardner, Meester Lester," said Fritz, with a grand air. "Captain Georch Mayvair."

The "Captain's" looks confessed him a humbug. He was a slim, hard-featured Englishman, "pop-eyed" and weak-mouthed. He was shifty on his legs and uncertain as to his backbone. As I looked at him he nervously smiled.

"Oxcoos us!" said Fritz, bustling about. "Me 'n' mine bardner's kot to ko down town mit pizness."

The twain went off down the street. Fritz wore an important air, while the Captain talked to him confidentially. It was the first time I had ever seen Fritz knocking off in work hours.

As I turned to leave the shop I saw quiet Jake smiling to himself, wiselike.

While walking homeward I found myself recalling a fellow I had known years before in the mines of Colorado. He was a coarse and common laborer; but one day luck gave him a silver mine. With his rise in fortune, he grew self-confident. Soon he bullied his hands; snubbed unpretending business men; belittled all who were not rich; indulged in vulgar display; sneered at "book-learning." He had his parasites, who flattered him when he threw dollars their way. The thoughtless envied him. The rich took him in among them, just far enough to unload stock on him.

If Fritz should make a fortune!

In occasionally passing by Fritz's shop afterwards, I would look in, always to find Fritz out. Jake attended to the customers. These were not many, as his "boss" kept no ready-made stock. When I went in on business, Jake took my measure or passed judgment on my heeltaps. The way he went about the work showed he knew his trade. He could get along without a "boss."

I met Fritz one day on the street. The experiment, he told me, was dragging along. It cost a good deal, experimenting. His partner's capital had run out and Fritz was now carrying the whole venture himself. Yes, it took money.

A few months later I found Fritz one day back at his bench. As I entered the shop he looked at me dolefully:

"Ach—yaw—yees! Meester Lester, I'm poor man akain. Dot swintler kot oud o' me dwo t'ousant fife hundert tollar. All the safens uf a livetime."

"It's a good thing you have this shop left."

"Ach! Meppe I'll hev to sell't."

"Then it's a good thing you have you trade left."

I bore his adversity bravely.

"M-putt, I've lost my worktime for twenty-five year. Yaw; yees. Mein Gott! Sell der shop."

"Jour" Jake was doubled up over his work, leaning low.

Some weeks afterward I went into the shop again. A revolution had taken place. Jake was in Fritz's seat; Fritz was in Jake's seat.

It was Jake, the "boss," who greeted me. He hailed me cheerily.

"Evenin', Meester Lester!"

Fritz did not look up. I said:

"Good evening, gentlemen!"

Fritz, with face burning, nodded hastily at the floor.

Jake talked. He had bought that shop. He was going to run it "better as effer." He would change nothing—except seats with Fritz. Work hard and hold fast were his methods in business. He had by this means saved fifteen hundred dollars in ten years. He had paid a hundred for the shop. He knew enough to take care of his money. Some folks didn't.

As he talked Jake leaned back and let his voice out big; and even the lasts on the shelves shook. From Fritz, whose eyes saw only the boot between his knees, nothing was heard save the pounding of his hammer. It sounded muffled, as if tolling a knell to his departed greatness.

Jake called out to Fritz harshly—they were two feet apart:

"D'ye expeck to gid dot poot tone te-day? Vork, vill ye, zif ye hat some li-live by ye!"

Fritz labored on without a word.

When I was leaving, Jake walked outside the door with me. He gave me his confidence:

"I hef sich trouple mit mine hants! Dot feller in t'ere he's no goot. Um neffer vos no shoemaker. He misfid aferybodies. Always mate your shoes too tighd, tid'n he, yah? I'll—fire—heem—yedd! Putt, virst I gif him yust a leedle doses uf dot sour metticine he guf me dese menmy long year."

Yet one more glimpse of the two.

One evening on my way to Jake's shop, I saw from the street Fritz in a corner barroom, drunk. He was very drunk. An athletic Irishman standing in front of him was calling him a fool of a Dutchman. Fritz was gazing at the Irishman foolishly. His hat had fallen back on his head; locks of his coarse dark hair were down over his eyes; beer froth was on his beard; his arms were drunk, so that he was spilling beer from his glass; his crooked legs staggered under their load.

At the shoemaker's shop, Jake said as I entered:

"Ah! I zaw ye look'n' 't Fritz ofer t'ere. He's no goot. I hat to pownce um. I vaited ten long year to kit efen mit dot rooster. Opshtard! Ven he vos poss, he work hard 'noff. Putt ennyboddy kin vork eef hees poss. It dakes a man to pee jour, unt vork, unt soobmit, unt aferydings. Dot veller Fritz he gid along in brospérité all righd, putt he cood'n' take his dose of bofferty, like me. He's no man; no goot unter heffen at all."

Then, with an outburst of contempt:

"Der oud and oud tam vool! He cood'n' bear up under perverssity!"



The Genius of the Boom.

From the very year that Elcott was settled, its people assumed that their town was to become a city, perhaps one of the great cities of its region—the northwest. Of a certainty, the site of Elcott was fine. Broadside on the north was a range of high hills, shielding the place from the winds of winter; along on the south ran a winding river, emptying into a lake whose waters shimmered on the horizon. The broad slopes extending from the uplands to the lake meadows became in time studded with farm houses and checkered with rich fields. Elcott enjoyed a good climate and excellent water; its residence and business streets could be readily extended over its suburban levels, and the agricultural lands roundabout could be relied on for abundant and cheap products of the soil. Aye; no reason why the town should not grow to cityhood.

For years, however, Elcott contemplated its possible future greatness as a pleasant dream rather than as an object to be striven for. Many of Elcott's townspeople were farmers, tilling lands of their own near the place, some of the more successful as they advanced in years merely superintending their acres or letting them out on shares. The householder in the

town itself commonly had a vegetable garden in the rear of his dwelling, with a stable beyond facing on a back alley. The business interests of the place were small, few attempts being made to set up manufactures. The railroad, of course, brought with it a few changes and some new people. But, on the whole, Elcott was taunted by boastful rivals as a sleepy town, lacking the energy to develop its natural opportunities.

This reputation gave no offense to the elders of Elcott. In their opinion Elcott if slow was also sure. In forty years the town had never seen a real estate foreclosure. Indeed, mortgages were never in much demand; Elcott's merchants paid their debts promptly in cash. Its people, if not aspiring, were independent. Nearly every family possessed its own home, however humble. Even the laboring man, owner of his own garden patch, his cow, his pigs, and his fruit trees, raised produce enough to keep his family table supplied the year round; and from his wages came comfortable clothing and something for the rainy day. To the least well off in Elcott the present was secure, and the future as certain as mother nature's bounty. Leading men there were in Elcott, regarded by their neighbors as wise men, who held that the town, rated behind the times though it might be, was having its full share of the world's happiness.

Whatever material progress came to Elcott, however, was not unappreciated. In time its cheap living brought to it a large boarding school and several modest hotels; and once in a while a man with capital, to set up a factory. The farmers who came to live in

town also helped to build it up. On the whole, the population of Elcott kept abreast with that of the region.

In the course of years some of the active business men grew moderately well off, even rich, as riches are estimated in small communities. At length a time came when certain worldly-wise observers gave it out that nowhere in the northwest were real estate and money in trade yielding better average returns than in Elcott. Knowledge of this circumstance gradually spread among the gossipy members of the bar and their class about town, and it came to be mentioned in the local newspapers.

"Why, this fact signifies that your whole place is undercapitalized!" The judgment, this, of a guest at the Antelope Hotel, given one evening to an Elcott lawyer who had been telling him of the high returns on local investments. "The prices on all your properties here ought to be marked up; and the town ought to do a larger volume of business. Your people need experienced outside capitalists to come in and develop you."

On looking further into the matter, this Antelope guest, a promoter of enterprises, promised to enlist moneyed Eastern friends of his in the benevolent scheme of developing Elcott.

Returning to Chicago, the speculator drew up a prospectus for "The Elcott Land and Improvement Company." In the rose-colored phraseology of this document, Elcott had 10,000 inhabitants (the number in fact was barely 6,000); its situation was unrivaled;

its climate was superlatively good; its laboring people were anxious for work at moderate wages; its factories were declaring 20 per cent dividends; its real estate rentals warranted a rise of 100 per cent in value; its public utilities, such as gas works and waterworks, were inadequate to the urgent needs of the place; its little one-mule street car line could be replaced profitably by an electric road; its old frame school houses ought to give way to commodious structures of brick, built on bonds; its entire suburbs could be bought at acre prices and then sold as town lots, etc., etc.

While proceeding thus to form his improvement company, the Antelope guest congratulated himself on seeing in Elcott "a sure thing." But having no capital, he found forming a company slow work.

This promoter's prospectus, however, fell into the hands of shrewd men. Soon after it was issued, the register of the Antelope Hotel showed that at recent dates a number of Chicago and Eastern gentlemen had arrived in Elcott. Some of these gentry at first explained that they were there for their health, while others said they were "merely on a tour of investigation." But, unacquainted with one another on their arrival, they soon discovered that the business bringing one was that which had brought all. They were stealing a march on the prospectus maker. In a few weeks they had converted the hotel reading room into a quiet real estate exchange. There they passed their days and evenings discussing, as experienced exploiters, Elcott's advantages and the values of its various forms of property. As a consequence, for several

successive issues the Elcott Weekly Sun contained a goodly list of local real estate transfers. Before the community had waked up to it, these outside speculators had snapped up the choice of the suburban lands, with many a good lot in the main streets besides. At length, one memorable week the Sun came out with a startling two-page article under the significant heading, "Boom!" spread in great black letters at the top of three columns. And the week after that the paper reveled in the lavish promises of "The Elcott Land and Improvement Company," our original Antelope guest having just arrived on the ground—in time to find the best things monopolized. Poverty-fettered talent once again second best to ready money!

Then the game began in earnest. A morning paper, the News, soon made its appearance, forcing the Sun, to save its credit, to come out daily, too. Every issue of both papers now contained brilliant prophecies for the future of Elcott. Millions of Eastern capital was to flow into the city, for "city" it now was to every one. Soon electric lights illumined the streets; again a little while and the mule street-car line was a trolley, lengthened three miles in each of its four branches. Seven handsome brick school houses went up, on bonds. The river was spanned by a new steel bridge. An elegant five-story buff-brick and terracotta hotel, "The Vendome," shot up on a corner opposite the now antiquated Antelope. On the next block rose the Elcott opera house, having in front one hundred office rooms facing on the main street and in the rear "the largest auditorium west of Chicago."

These numerous improvements attracted to Elcott workingmen, especially of the building trades, by the hundred. For these and their families dwellings were run up in the outskirts, where land, less than a year before selling at fifty or a hundred dollars an acre, now commanded five hundred dollars a lot. To build rows upon rows of houses for working-people, and many detached cottages besides, enterprising capital was promptly on hand.

The journalists of the Sun and the News, smart chaps, soon learned how to ring the changes on the boom idea. In all that they wrote the underlying thought was that a great good had come to Elcott's wage-earners. Elcott's manufacturing machinery (much of it mythical) was humming, its bricklayers' trowels were merrily tinkling in the summer air, its trolley car gongs were ringing, its express wagons were speeding in the busy streets, its storekeepers were daily opening great boxes of goods from the East—all for the benefit of labor, first and foremost. Capital, discovering the dormant resources of the town, and hastening to develop them with its "Open, sesame!" was conferring upon the laboring classes that inestimable blessing overlooked by Providence—plenty of hard work.

In the fitness of things, the newspapers soon brought out before the public eye a great man, born of the boom, as Napoleon was of war. This hero they selected early, and with insight, too, it seemed, since he leaped to wealth and influence in a series of singularly fortunate ventures. His name was Hogg. Of

his antecedents little was known, except that when he came to Elcott, a few months after the boom began, he was possessed of only slender means. His entire capital on entering the real estate business, it was whispered, consisted of the proceeds of a church fair, of which he was treasurer. These he staked on a real estate "option," and by a lucky sale quickly got back his bet with a profit. He at once honestly reimbursed the church, and by further giving a hundred dollars to its poor laid up treasures in heaven. For a time, this speculator's favorite dealings were in "options." Calling upon a lot owner he would guarantee him so many hundred dollars in cash if he should fail to sell the man's property by a certain date at an agreed price, usually ten to twenty per cent more than the possessor had hoped to obtain. This Hogg was enabled to do in the upward rush of prices, which carried values far beyond the hopes of the most sanguine old resident. But very soon Hogg passed beyond this modest stage of the business. With many irons in the fire, he became famous for buying almost any Elcott real property or company stock offered him. The story was current that men who owned not a rood of ground anywhere would sell to Hogg, at their own price and without any evidence of ownership, vacant lots miles out on the uplands; thereupon rushing off to buy the land from the owners at half the sum they had got from Hogg. When cautious friends advised him to look up such little suburban bargains for himself, Hogg magnanimously declared that he remembered his own day of small things and believed in giv-

ing beginners a start; his time was now fully taken up in great ventures—the electric road, the superb opera house, the various imposing business blocks in which he was chief stockholder. Hence Hogg was eulogized, not only as a born leader in the modern science of city building, but as a man of public spirit and noble ideas. Worshiped—or envied—by the mass of men who ached for the Midas touch, Hogg, every one conceded, was the genius of the boom.

Hogg ceaselessly proclaimed his faith in the future of Elcott. The two newspapers had each a “bull” interview with him on real estate matters at least once a week. His stock of phrases was largely drawn from the captivating flamboyancies which grace real estate advertisements: “Realty is still looking up;” “A brilliant future awaits capital and labor in Elcott;” “Improvements on a vast scale are promised;” “A general upward tendency exists in prices;” “The thermometer of trade is the list of transfers,” and the like. To the readers of the Sun and the News, most of whom knew him only through print, or by seeing him inspecting a new enterprise, or sitting in a box at the opera house, Hogg, among all the new great men of Elcott, was supreme.

I was in those days a pushing but penniless young newspaper reporter, dazzled by the rocket-like ascent of Elcott among the cities and duly hypnotized by the potent name of Hogg. It may therefore be imagined that I was inexpressibly shocked when, while I was one day interviewing a politician from Chicago, my “subject” turned abruptly to another matter, calmly remarking:

"I see that that lunatic Jim Hogg has his name in your paper to-day, and that in your town here he seems to be somebody."

I hastened to explain to this stranger in Elcott who Mr. Hogg was, tracing in outline the great boomer's career, and expressing myself, as I now remember, with aggressive dignity.

"Very likely; very likely," said the politician, an elderly man of the world, speaking with the coolness of a pilot. "All that story merely bears out a theory of mine—that betting on real estate in a boom is pure gambling. Your green cloth has grown to the dimensions of a town-site; and you have more spots to bet your pile on; that's all. As long as a fellow wins he can build opera houses. But, when both bank and players bust, what then? You wait till your boom's over."

This vexed me. I decided upon another tack. I would shame this reckless defamer of our town and its first citizen.

"Why do you go to the extreme," I asked stiffly, "of referring to Mr. Hogg as a lunatic? Is that right?"

"It's right, if the truth's right. Why, bless your eyes, young fellow, I've known Jim Hogg for years. Used to work with him in a big printing office in Chicago. Every man in the house regarded him as 'off.' What little mind he had he couldn't keep on his work; he was a botch. He was a 'gone policy fiend,' losing right along and never seeing the bunco in the game. He was subject to fits. He used to gabble to any one who would listen to him about what he would do

when he won a million. Once he showed signs of violence, and the boys chipped in and sent him to an asylum. But the doctors soon let him out, sending us word that he was harmless."

Estopped by fact, I was unable to reply.

"Now, look here," he continued, "for your own satisfaction, watch Hogg closely, and see if his whole play is not made with the idea that the game is to get bigger and bigger indefinitely."

I suspected he had here hit the truth.

"And observe his speech. It used to be incoherent—made up of short, catchy phrases, such as imbeciles jabber."

This with regard to the Hon. James Hogg's favorite apophthegms, quoted approvingly in every circle of Elcott: "All or nothing;" "Now or never;" "Push your luck;" "Fortune's ahead;" "Land is money;" "Dirt pays."

"And watch his eyes. They used to have a wandering look, like a monkey's."

We in Elcott had spoken of this look as "the far-seeing gaze of genius."

"Now, a word further, my young friend," my "subject" continued. "You boomers haven't yet learned the difference between business and forestalling, between square tradesmen and thimble-riggers. A true business man is faithful in his work and careful of his good name; he possesses honest instincts; he organizes and manages, and according to his talent he ought to succeed; he helps his community in helping himself; his work is a true link in the chain of honest pro-

duction; he is a boon to his fellows; he can be, and should be, a man—sound, sterling, sane. But the forestaller, rushing into every sort of enterprise, cares nothing for good principles and thinks only of himself. He possesses, not talent, but a pirate's audacity. He is a detriment to a good community. He may be a successful winner, even if he is a lunatic."

I began to perceive why this Chicago politician had a reputation for sagacity and rude eloquence.

Did I report this talk about Hogg in the interview I published? Not I. Nor did I repeat it to a living soul. I was cautious about blaspheming the gods of the populace. But afterward I kept my eyes open to fact. Whenever it chanced, as it occasionally did, that I was in Mr. Hogg's presence, I noticed—not without pain and some guilt—that the great man's manner and talk had been aptly described by the politician from Chicago. Mr. Hogg's eyes did wander. He was nervous, even feverish. His sentences were short and jerky. His talk about real estate was in the "policy" vein, and he couldn't quit the subject. I sometimes caught myself thinking: "If he hadn't a mint of money, what would people say about him?"

Soon after, Mr. Hogg, as one of a committee of three, was sent by our Board of Trade to several neighboring cities, ostensibly to gather facts as to their sewerage systems, but really to boom Elcott, its enterprises and its real estate. The speeches this committee made at dinners and other meetings were telegraphed to our two daily papers. One evening when the wires were down from a storm and the speeches

failed to come, our managing editor, an irreverent fellow, said to me: "Here, string a lot of Hogg's fool gags together, and head them as his speech. He can only make one speech, like a parrot, and that one he's been cackling ever since he struck Elcott."

One other man, at least, had seen through Hogg.

It kept up for another year—that pulse-quickenning boom, with its venturesome building, its bubble-blowing of land values, its newspaper puffing of leaders in money-grabbing, and above all its spectacularizing of Hogg as the positive genius of Elcott's new era.

By that time, however, disquieting rumors had begun to be afloat. Business in general was poor. Some of our great capitalists, it was hinted, were "in deep water." Commercial paper was going to protest; whispers of back-office compromises were heard, and at length high authority in the business world advised us newspaper men to go slow in publishing facts that might give rise to panic. But finally the crash came. It was precipitated by an event wholly unexpected. Hogg committed suicide.

We reporters were constrained by our duty to go into particulars. We dug up all the sensational features of the event. While collecting some of the details, I met a certain doctor, who, in confidence, let this cat out of the bag:

"Yes, several of us in the medical profession have been aware for some months that Mr. Hogg was demented, just how long we don't know. He was insane only on one subject—money. On facing great losses he developed suicidal tendencies."

Here was the undoubted fact! The genius of the boom—the consummate flower of Elcott's exalted estate—had all along been crazy.

Down went the boom like a card house. The completeness of the wreck could at first hardly be realized. But with a halt to building, everything else came to an end. In a few months hundreds of the working people took their departure from Elcott, cursing the hour they came. Those of the speculators who could get away went soon, some fleeing "between days," leaving damaged reputations behind.

When all was over, the old Elcottites began asking one another what the boom had ever been based upon, what there had been in Elcott to warrant their stupendous expectations. In the end the answer was: Nothing. Nothing, at least, except wild speculation, led by Hogg, the lunatic. On regaining their old-time sober senses, the Elcottites admitted that Elcott had been a big bedlam, that they themselves had all been money-mad, and that their master mind was a mind cracked.

Some of the outside speculators were stranded in Elcott. Among them was that early inspirer of the boom, the Antelope Hotel guest, the prospectus maker. To-day he grubs his living, with spade and hoe, out of a three-acre lot, all that is left him from the wreck. In his honest poverty he makes a clean breast of his part in the boom.

"These old Elcott people," he is wont to say, "we regarded as unprogressive. But were they? They had homes and all the good and true and right things

that the word home implies. They trusted one another. Few were corrupted by riches and none knew poverty. They had social virtues. But we came and taught them commercial deviltries. We inspired them besides with a wicked discontent; we led them to overrate wealth, and brought them to regard rich rascals and rich fools as the best citizens. Well, we've all got our reward. I exhausted a credit I was years and years building up. I misled my Eastern friends who trusted me with their money, and now I have little left either in means or reputation. Few got anything out of the boom to keep. While it lasted everybody was betting more and more heavily, all waiting for the colossal jackpot to be got at by hanging on—only to find it empty when it broke.”

Stark ruin was left in the wake of the boom in every quarter of the town. Fire or flood could hardly have wrought greater ravage. The decline in lot values on the main streets was fully nine-tenths. The vacant lot “additions” that had sprung up in every direction in the suburbs again became “acre property,” worth less than it had been years before, because carrying a burden of heavy taxes. To this day many of the public buildings, as well as business blocks, stand unfinished. Among them are the magnificently planned new city hall, yet a ragged half-story in granite; four new churches, not one of them under roof; and “Elcott College,” its first-story walls looming up solitary on a bare hill a mile from town, a dreary monument to soaring ambition. The daily News suspended—that is, passed out of existence; the

Sun, again but a weekly, has its plant mortgaged. The elegant offices in the opera-house block are occupied as living rooms by Italian laborers. The Hotel Vendome is closed. Houses built to rent for fifty dollars a month bring but five, their tenants, usually unemployed, barely able to pay that. Most melancholy sight of all are the numerous pretty suburban dwellings now tenantless. Many of them, long and fondly foreplanned by heads of families, were to be loved homes. These deserted buildings are falling into decay, the doors and windows boarded up or broken. Their fences are going—pickets missing or whole panels lying upon the earth. The grounds are neglected—vines and plants running wild, and dust and dead leaves littering the steps and piazzas;—time's mockery of fair hopes now blasted.

The city's concrete sidewalks are out of repair, and its asphalt street pavements cracking and crumbling. Stock in the gas and electric light company—in "public utilities" in general—pays not one-half of one per cent. The interest on the school-house bonds is unpaid. Miles of the street railway has been taken up, and on what is left cars run only once in thirty minutes.

Worse than the existing ruin is the impossibility, not only of rapid recuperation, but of the restoration of Elcott's lost primitive advantages. The taxes threaten every poor houseowner with the loss of his home. Before the boom Elcott had the prestige of a possible future; since the boom both capital and labor have avoided the town as over-exploited, discredited, dead.

Sometimes our old Antelope Hotel guest walks about the town with strangers, to show them the ruins. Grown philosophic since the turn in his fortunes, he has tried to work out in his mind what the rise and fall of Elcott points to. The visitors, startled and disturbed at what they see, ask him what it all means; and in reply, he moralizes: "In recalling the disasters that have overtaken great modern cities, and the triumphs of these cities over their trials, the thoughtful must see that they were aided by conditions that favor progress. Paris recovered buoyantly from the devastations of war because she was capital of an industrious nation. Chicago rose hopefully after its fire because confident of a glorious future. But Elcott's hopeless state tells of other conditions. Elcott reminds us of ancient cities—Thebes and Paestum; Rome itself—which died with a declining civilization. Bad morals killed those cities. Bad morals, public and economic sins destructive to individual honor and manhood, weakened and finally killed even the nations that gave those cities life.

"Elcott was financially immoral. Its boomers were falsifiers; and from them a general habit of unverity spread to the community. Its citizens became gamblers; and the fever of the play unseated their reason. They worshiped gold; and hence disparaged labor. They abandoned the homely maxims of fair reward for honest toil; to take up with the maxims of the dishonest and purse-proud who would have others toil for them. The Elcottites and the boom-criers overreached themselves, calamitously.

"How far," the retired promoter questions, "will the causes that laid Elcott low carry their direful consequences in this country? Are our forces of social construction to continue stronger than the forces of destruction, which grow more and more evident?"

"Is Elcott's fate no more than a warning, which will be heeded, or is it a forerunner of the doom awaiting a whole nation whose commercial morals of to-day stand in illuminative contrast with those of a generation ago?"



Bacchus.

We older clerks remembered Batchelor Wood, only son of the head of our firm, as a fat boy of twelve. His mother saw in him a pretty darling, and made him one of her objects of expensive decoration, fine in externals, like her turn-out or her mansion. Always a model of stylish dress, the boy was in character neither attractive nor unlovely. On the whole, rather a pampered nonentity.

That was thirteen years ago. At that time Mrs. Wood took Batchelor and his two sisters, then almost young ladies, to Europe, to finish their education. In four years she brought her girls back, launched them upon society, and in due course married them off, after which they at once returned to Europe. Batchelor was left over there—to roam from Stuttgart to Heidelberg, and to Paris and Vienna, lapping the cream of educational methods, as became a rich man's son.

Mr. Wood crossed the Atlantic nearly every summer to see his family. They had become denationalized Americans, familiar with the English colonies in a dozen Continental capitals and exclusive summer resorts. On his return from time to time, Mr. Wood had little to say about Batchelor, or, indeed,

any of them. His preference would have been a quiet suburban home, an American schooling for his children, a respectable standing in an old-fashioned community. But his aspiring wife overruled him.

About two years ago word went around the office that Batchelor was coming home to learn the business and to take his father's place in due time. In this matter the old gentleman was having his own way. His business was his pride. His one ambition in life had been, "to build from the ground up, a safe, sound, solid house." His fond expectation was to leave his business, the apple of his eye, to a son worthy the father and the honorable traditions of the firm.

Batchelor came home. Before he put in an appearance with us down town his father had nothing to say about him except to announce his arrival. Two weeks went by before we saw him. Then, instead of coming in at an appointed hour and being introduced, he dropped in on us with startling informality.

One morning I, Isaiah Duke, head clerk for a score of years, was in the office summing up accounts when I heard the hall door opening and a husky voice drawling the inquiry:

"Where's old Duke?"

I turned and saw one of our young clerks trying to eye down the visitor. The latter, a very stout young man, was smiling at the clerk with overbearing good nature. Seeing me, he called out:

"Hello, Duke! still at it, driving the pen!"

He pushed inside the railing, and with outstretched

hand came over to me, his walk a sluggish amble. Responding to my blank countenance, he said in a bellow, meant to be pleasant:

"Damn it, I'm Batch!"

I could only offer him my hand and mechanically utter a lip welcome.

"Duke, I want a hundred dollars; biff; right off!"

Naturally I hesitated.

"Come now," he went on in good humor, his slangy speech slow. "You stand for the gov'nor when he's out. Tender the prospective head of the house a hundred dollars."

His breath was heavy with liquor; his broad, smooth face was bloated. To know that young Wood was a confirmed sot required but one glance. The heavy lines of his face told of a lethargic intellect and of habitual self-indulgence. The German universities had done for him what they do for students of the fast set. But withal, over his whole countenance was an expansive expression of good nature and of total indifference to the serious side of life. Even a long scar across his right cheek—a souvenir of a Heidelberg duel, I imagined—failed to detract from that look of a jolly-dog.

I could but give him the money. The father, I knew, would wish me to end the scene. When I had counted out the cash to him, Batchelor walked out of the office with the heavy motion of a coal barge sailing down the bay.

After he closed the door behind him, the clerks were silent for a moment. Then Spence, our wit and

mimic, without lifting his head from his ledger, imitating the young man's voice, drawled:

"I'm Batch! Bacchus!"

The nickname stuck. The youth was thenceforth to the clerks simply a by-word. "Bacchus," sot, roysterer, a predestined business failure. And how were we, so particular in our work, to get along with him?

The next morning, soon after the office opened, he came again. He said, smiling solemnly:

"My lord Duke, the head of this house declares I must get down to vulgar work. Give me something to do—something dead easy, like directing the whole concern, factory and all,—and drawing checks."

I invited him into our private office. There I undertook to impress upon him his responsibilities as future head of the house. He grinned lazily.

"Look-a-here, Duke," he replied; "you're all right. But I've got used to throwing money away. I've won and lost, the last five years, more than this house has turned over. Just now I'm troué—as the French say—in a hole. I must put on a business front, to please the gov'nor. He's a brick, and I wouldn't hurt his feelings for the world. But start me on something easy."

As he would ruin discipline if put with the clerks, I gave him a desk in the private office. I set him at tab-work usually done by a boy. His father on coming in seemed pleased to see the young man doing anything. But, how the old man's hopes were plainly dashed! He could have cursed the benefits of a European education.

Batchelor, paying heed to my caution not to interfere with the clerks, kept away from the counting-room. But he soon found cronies outside in the neighborhood—other spoiled sons of wealth—and spent hours and days in their company. Thenceforth he was rarely in the office, except to make a show of working when his father was about. When the old man was out of town, the son stayed away all the time. We clerks tried to smooth matters between father and son, and I did a little white lying to convince the old gentleman that Batchelor was mending his ways. The old man's pride, however, never permitted him to dwell on his son's infirmities.

Batchelor became one of the odd characters of our office neighborhood. He loafed at the cafés, idled away time in trifling amusements, and gambled on everything anywhere. Once I found him with a party of chums in our private office, betting on the number of flies he could kill in five minutes. Never uproarious, he was phlegmatic, easy going, and always comfortably full. We of the clerical force grew accustomed to him, as we had to the noise of the elevator or to the smell from the leather-house next door. He was not a very creditable office appurtenance.

One day Batchelor said to me:

"Duke, old man, I'm going to reform."

My face, I dare say, was skeptical.

"Now, don't look contradiction," he continued. "What I'm going to do is this: 'I'll stop playing horse, or flies, or any small game. I'm going to stick to stocks. That was my first love abroad. I've just

made a good winner in the Street, and to the Street hereafter I'll be true. Yes, sir; I'm reformed."

My looks perhaps signified an inquiry. He said, in his droll way:

"Duke, I don't need any other reforming, do I?"

But he took to deeper drinking. He no longer made pretense to do any work. His only act that bore semblance to labor was reading the stock exchange reports. These he sifted. Besides financial journals and circulars, he took half a dozen daily papers for their Wall street news. More than once he said to me, with an air of conviction:

"I can beat this game."

It cost him no effort to follow the intricacies of the market. His memory of stock fluctuations and their causes was tenacious. In several flurries he made good sums by backing his own judgment against apparent street tendencies. His opinions in finance came to be sought by his fellows. It was a curious sight to see him, half-seas over, unkempt, drowsy, seated on his desk, legs dangling, indolently giving his views not only to small-fry bucket-shop traders but to large operators. It seemed that his drink quickened an underlying instinct, which divined the feints, doublings and pitfalls of Wall street. Besides, his easy-going good fellowship, his lavish outlay of money, and his befuddled condition, often brought him information he was able to interpret and use.

His father, who had given up making anything of him, knew little of his Wall street ventures. Once Mr. Wood asked me if I was lending money to Batch-

elor, as for a long time the son had not come on him for anything. No, I told him, Batchelor was borrowing from no one.

I wonder if the old gentleman was ever more astonished than he was the day Batchelor called him and me into the private office to give us advice.

"Pop," he said, "you'd better make ready to pull out of this business. A lot of big fellows are getting up a trust in our line, and you're not to be in it. They'll down you. Get out right now at any sacrifice."

Batchelor was more nearly sober than usual. The old man sat and looked on him with pity—a father's pity for an erring son, a veteran business man's pity for a novice.

"You think I don't know what I'm talking about," slowly said Batchelor. "I do; I tell you I do. You can save what's left of your business if you act on my word of warning."

"Batchelor," rejoined the father in his kind way, "I have managed this business with fair success for forty years. I believe I am able to carry it on still."

"New times, new ways," responded the son. "In your day, what counted in our business was integrity, application, good management of details. What counts now is the manoeuvrings of *la haute finance*, and you're not in that. Pop, honesty, sobriety, uprightness don't amount to shucks in the market. They're clogs on men with great heads. You stand for the successful business man of the past; I'm the model for the winner of to-day. You work; I play

the market when I'm not too full. Let me tell you what success I've had in the Street lately."

"Indeed, I will not," warmly replied the father. "I never was in Wall street in my life, and I'm distressed that you should be there now."

And he cut the interview short.

But Batchelor was right. Not a month afterward Mr. Wood told me he was being pinched by a trust. The price of our staple raw material had been raised on us exorbitantly, while rates to some of our rival houses had been lowered. This could only result in closing us up. We could no longer compete with the favored firms. Our factory must shut down, our clerks go, our very firm name disappear from the trade directory. Moreover, our stock in hand could be disposed of only at a serious loss. A sad ending this to Mr. Wood's honorable career, as well as to the hopes and special training of our clerks and to my own steady occupation and life-work.

When the bad news got around there was dismay in factory and counting-room. Mr. Wood, himself grief-stricken, decided to do the best he could for all hands. He brought to the office for consultation his factory superintendent, the three foremen, and a committee representing the workmen—our clerks sitting about on their high stools. It was a sad day for all—a day no one had ever imagined in his most bodeful dreams.

In a plaintive voice, Mr. Wood described the situation and explained he must close up everything at once unless all should consent to an immediate reduction in pay. He wished to give his employés a chance

to earn something while seeking work elsewhere. But at the furthest he must wind up the concern in a month or two.

It was a serious moment. For awhile, no one spoke. When the office door opened and Batchelor ambled in, it seemed an unfortunate interruption. But he made his way over beside his father, Mr. Wood evidently wishing him well away. Batchelor, however, seemed quite sober. He spoke:

"Father—and friends,—you'll excuse me when you hear me. My business education has been different from yours. You, among you, represent industry and honor—and all that. I represent what is on top in business to-day—rigging the markets, circumscribing trade, chocking off industry, and all that. You are under dogs in this fight. I've come out ahead. For some time in the stock market I've been on the track of the fellows that are destroying what you are building up. I've drifted right in my guesses from day to day, and I've won more money the last month than my good father ever called his own. Besides, I've got on the inside of the syndicate's plans, and have forced its promoters to let our house in on the ground floor. Our factory and office will keep open; our firm will do business at the old stand and I"—broadly smiling—"well, I guess I'll be what I've always been. I'll go on gambling in the Street and"—

"Thank God! thank God!" burst from old Mr. Wood's lips as the rest of us broke into a cheer.

I hoped no one had observed the old gentleman's slip of the tongue.

But, for many a day after, as we clerks went about our work, Spence would waggishly whisper to one or another of us:

"Thank God! Bacchus will drink and gamble in Wall street. He'll take good care of us all, thank God!"



Professor Droumont.

Miss Rose Edwin, seated in her comfortable dining-room, skimming over the home weekly newspaper and finding little in it but dull items in dead print, at length paused to read one article with interest to the end. It was a letter to the public. It ran:

"To the Benevolent Public: The writer wishes to bring to your attention a case of destitution the circumstances of which are unusual. In a hovel in one of our back streets lies an aged man, sick and in danger of starvation. He had a paralytic stroke more than a year ago, after being able to earn but little for several years, owing to his advanced age. He has no longer any means, is without relatives in this country, and most of the time is alone. A poor neighbor calls in on him during the day to attend to his pressing wants. If charitable people do not promptly take his case in hand, there is nothing before him but the Poor-house or starvation.

"The statement of these facts alone, the writer feels, would be sufficient to enlist aid for the old gentleman, but more ought to be told in order to secure for him all the friendly help of which he is so deserving. The sufferer is none other than Professor Droumont, the teacher of languages, from whom many of our towns-

people have in years past received instruction. It will pain his old pupils to learn that their gentle, gray-haired professor, for so many years apparently well-to-do, is thus at the close of his useful life encountering the direst poverty, while in a state of prolonged physical suffering. There was a time when our community had not his equal as instructor in Greek, Latin, French, German and other branches. He worked cheerfully and industriously until he was no longer able to go about. His case should especially interest teachers. It is to be hoped that this letter will immediately bring friends to his bedside, and that from now until the end, which cannot be far off, he will lack no comfort nor assuagement of his afflictions.

Respectfully,

"One of his Pupils."

"My old French teacher!" Miss Edwin exclaimed, her heart touched. "I, at any rate, will help him."

The letter brought vividly to her mind scenes of her school days, with M. Droumont in the central place of every mental picture. Before the infirmities of age had come upon him and bereavement broken his spirit, the Professor was a notable figure wherever seen. In him native grace and dignity of mien were so united with a transparent simplicity and a human sympathy that he won all hearts. These inborn gifts being enhanced by a wide acquaintance with the world and literature, he was, in the language of an era that is past, the mirror of gentlemanhood.

Miss Edwin at once sent a letter to the Professor

by a servant. In it was the means of relieving the old man's immediate wants. He never knew who the sender was.

That afternoon she made her way to Professor Droumont's dwelling. She found it, as his old pupil had written, a hovel—a low, two-story frame building, weather-worn, its timbers rotten with age. The narrow lot in which it stood was overrun with weeds.

The front door stood open, and Miss Edwin entered. At the first room to which she came she knocked. The door was opened by a man whose appearance was that of a half-wit. He was under-sized, fat, and flabby. His head, of enormous size, was covered with bushy black hair; his features were heavy, his little eyes crossed, and his great lips protuberant. Miss Edwin surmised he was the poor neighbor who looked after her old teacher.

"Does Professor Droumont live here?"

"Ye—e—sh." The reply was a growl, though not ill-natured.

Miss Edwin waited a moment, that the half-wit might collect his thoughts and tell her where the Professor was to be found. She meanwhile observed that the man was a cane-seat maker. His apron was stuck with lengths of cane, the floor within the room was strewn with them, and an inverted chair, with a seat half woven, stood over in the window light.

The man again said:

"Ye—e—sh!" as if he meant, What next?

"Where is Professor Droumont? I would like to see him."

But the half-wit replied:

"Just leave the tract here."

"But I have no tract," explained Miss Edwin. "I want to see the Professor."

The man's face had only one expression—stolid; surly; something like a big dog's. Indeed, as he eyed her, his look was that of the watchdog.

"What church er ye from?"

"No church," said Miss Rose.

"Want ter pray?" asked the man, his growling unchanged.

"No," said Miss Rose.

"He's up them stair, then." The half-wit settled back to work slowly, as the watchdog retreats to his kennel when a stranger has passed within the house he is guarding.

She went up the short flight of ramshackle stairs. At the landing there was but one door. It stood open.

On a bed near the one little window of the room lay M. Droumont, the daylight full on his face. He was gazing out above into the open. Miss Edwin was struck with his noble profile and the fine contour of his head.

She advanced into the room. He feebly turned to look at her, and then greeted her with quiet courtesy. On her introducing herself he was slow in recalling her.

"I have taught so many," he said, "and little girls change in fifteen years."

She meanwhile observed with a shock the old man's

squalid surroundings. The bedding was coarse and ragged; the pillow hard and unyielding; the bedstead old; the floor carpetless. The only furniture besides the bed was a battered washstand and two crazy kitchen chairs. But strewn about were books—be-thumbed volumes, their bindings of bygone styles.

Through an open door Miss Edwin could see into an inner room. There the furniture was also scant and shabby, but on the table were books, and on the chairs and on the floor.

She placed a bunch of flowers from her garden on a shelf where the old man could look at them as he lay on the bed. He smiled his thanks faintly. She talked to him about old times; he replied civilly, but with little show of interest.

He seemed under a restraint. His response to her best efforts at cheering talk were only perfunctory. As she rose to take her leave, he looked at her as if awaiting a new topic, the one he thought she had come to descant upon. But when she moved toward the door, his expression changed. He regarded her as if puzzled. Then he seemed relieved, as if she had spared him an expected infliction.

The next time Miss Edwin called at the Professor's—a few days afterward—the watchdog half-wit stopped work on seeing her in the front yard. He came to his door and looked at her silently, brute-like, until she had reached the upper landing. He seemed to know she should pass unchallenged; but he had not yet made up his mind just what she was. No tract; no prayers; no pious reading; no dole. What could she be?

Miss Edwin found the Professor in the inner room, seated on a stiff-backed great chair, its collapsed seat leveled up with folio volumes.

The old gentleman's greeting was less constrained than on her first visit. Still, as the two talked he seemed to expect from her the usual jarring overture, his glances alternating between her and the patch of sky visible from his window. Imagining he feared a subject not to his taste, she talked to please him—of his books, his old pupils, his travels. But she failed to engage his interest, courteous though he was. There was yet ice between them. Her task was the one at which so many charitable souls have failed—putting poverty at ease with bounty, and bounty at ease with poverty.

With a deepening sense of the barrier between her motives and the old man's confidence, Miss Edwin was struck with the destitution that had here overtaken worth. Its books excepted, the room was the meanest she had ever seen. The ceiling was low. The light came from two cramped windows overlooking the street. Between these windows stood an old table; on it was a cheap lamp, its chimney black with smoke. In front of the dingy mantel was a cracked and rusty little stove. In a corner stood a battered trunk. No other furniture but bookcases,—three of them, all old and rickety, their shelves packed with well-worn volumes. Miss Edwin, looking closely, noticed among the books ancient classic authors, the principal American poets, an illustrated German cyclopedia, and numerous scientific works. Old news-

papers and magazines were scattered about the room in heaps. In one corner was a pile of foreign periodicals, yellow with age, almost ceiling high. Everything in the apartment was dust covered.

Miss Edwin's attention was brought back to the old man himself, by hearing him, in his French accent, asking, gently:

"Are you a missionary reader?"

"No!" she answered, in surprise.

"But perhaps you come from a charitable society?"

"No."

"You don't represent any denomination, spreading its tenets?"

"No."

"Ah!" An exclamation of equal relief and surprise. He went on:

"You will pardon me, I hope. A stream of well-meaning people have come here, somewhat relieving my physical wants, it is true. But each one had a conscience burdened with anxiety as to my creed, and my answers being unsatisfactory they did not return. I cannot blame them; they must first take care of the poor of their own church."

The old gentleman's French accent was so slight that it is not to be reproduced here by any marring of English in print; no more than could type represent his cultivated enunciation.

The Professor's restraint, as well as the half-wit's behavior on the first day she came, was now clear to Miss Edwin.

"I don't care what you believe," she said, "I want

to cheer you up, and do what little I can for you."

"That's what Leon says," M. Droumont mused, smiling.

"Who is Leon?"

"The cane-seat maker below—my best friend now."

"Well," said Miss Edwin, "I'll try to have as much sense as Leon, and not worry you about your faith."

"Many good people couldn't do that, I found," returned the Professor. "And Leon, seeing they annoy me, fights them off."

So the ice was broken.

Miss Edwin continued her visits. She was the only one of the charitable persons brought by the letter in the newspaper who became a regular caller. The others soon had reasons for staying away. They had to attend to the needy of their own congregations; they could not thaw out the old foreigner easily; they could send him things just as well as they could bring them. But then they forgot to send him anything.

In a few days after Miss Edwin's second call the Professor's two rooms had been cleaned up. Seeing that the old man liked Leon to wait on him, and ascertaining that Leon earned only three dollars a week, she engaged the half-wit to be the Professor's nurse. Leon swept and dusted the rooms, prepared the meals for his master and himself, and, what best pleased the old man, kept quiet. Leon was strong. He carried his patient from the bed to the big chair by the window, and back again to the bed. The big chair, by the way, was now a new one, a piazza rocking chair,

with broad arms and feather cushions, a gift from Miss Edwin. New bed clothes had also come from her house.

Before long Miss Edwin and Professor Droumont were friends. Left free in his choice of subjects, the old man talked to her of books and music, flowers and birds. Pointing out a volume on a shelf, that she might bring it to him, he would turn its leaves over and tell her about its author, whom perhaps he had known, for he had had a wide acquaintance among celebrities fifty years before. Of one author he would say that he had gathered riches; of another that he had let wealth go by so that he might contribute by his learning or talent to the general good. Or the old scholar would select a treatise on German music and talk about it eloquently as he fondly thumbed the book over. With mere mention of its surface points—its printing and binding, the vein of its music, the school of its author—he would go on and interpret the meaning and message of its text. Thus would he bring out a vein of philosophy, with amusement or instruction. When talking on a favorite theme his whole face would light up with an expression that appeared to Miss Edwin to be beautiful and noble.

In time the aged Professor warmed toward her so that he could touch on reminiscences personal to himself. One day he asked her to open the old trunk and bring out its contents. She lifted the lid, to find that the only thing inside was a guitar in a case. He told her that when a boy, at his home in Southern

France, he had learned to play that very instrument. In Paris society it had smoothed his way. He took it in his hands and fondled it. He sighed. He thrummed its one good string. The other strings, broken, were curled about its keys. As for himself, his palsied hands shook. He was a worn-out instrument, too.

It was weeks after, and when their friendship had ripened, that he grew to talk freely about his family. For many years now, he said, as a teacher in a strange land, his relations with people had been but formal. He never could open up to pupils those matters which were close to his heart. But, once on the subject now with Miss Edwin, he unlocked his soul. He disclosed himself as a defender of liberty and as a lover of his early home fireside. He had taken part in Paris in three revolutions. Twice he was on the winning side, with liberty—in '30 and '48—but in December, '51, his cause met defeat. And when the curly-mustached Emperor mounted the throne Professor Droumont left a country in which he could no longer be happy.

At times he dwelt tenderly on recollections of his childhood. His father, a professional man, had lived on a small place in the suburbs of their Southern town. He died in early middle age. To young Droumont was left the care of his mother and three sisters. The young man educated himself and the girls. The mother passed away before he quitted France, but he left his three sisters there, maintaining them until they died. This was why he was now poor. He had devoted himself to making four long lives happy, and he had risked all and lost all in opposing a usurper. Then,

too, his instincts were the scholar's, not the financier's.

It was to Miss Edwin heart-instruction to hear the old man speak of his home life, either in Southern France or in Paris. In the great city the family had lived respectably in a good neighborhood. Perhaps they might have saved a little had they lived in a poor quarter. But that, with their refinements, would hardly have been life at all.

It awakened a new vein of emotion in Miss Edwin when the Professor explained to her the motives of his patriotism. He had fought for liberty because of his hopes for the human race. He believed that in so taking up arms he became a soldier in the cause of the highest religion. On this theme he was still an enthusiast. He never grew tired of extolling liberty. Without personal liberty, he averred, there was no morality. In his analyses of society, he found the most of its shortcomings to be caused by restrictions of men's freedom. To the champion of liberty he awarded first place—above statesman, or scholar, or priest. Only second as a friend of man was the competent and faithful teacher. The patriot soldier aims at political liberty; the teacher enlarges the play of mental and moral liberty. The Professor had assumed his own life-tasks for the good that was in them. And now he looked back, at eighty years of age, satisfied. He had no regrets.

When Miss Edwin had been visiting poor old paralyzed Professor Droumont three months, she always approached his abode with pleasant an-

ticipations. She never listened to him but she learned something new or good, or was made to see life in a pleasing and novel light, or was uplifted by some fine emotion. Though her bounty was liberal, she felt that she was the debtor. Her help to the old man was in things material; he opened up to her vistas in the intellectual and spiritual.

On his part, the aged philosopher, awaiting the end, was pleased, not with Miss Edwin's alms, but with her sympathy. He never complained of his ills. He never bemoaned his lot. He never mentioned money. He told her that since his working powers were gone he had little to live for. In his miseries he saw no disgrace. Vitality, he said, had outlasted his body—that was all. As long as he was able to take care of himself, he had lived as a man should. When they carried him into this back street, with a few of his unsalable effects, they had left to him the rich past.

After once expressing his gratitude to Miss Edwin for her bounty, which he did tenderly and beautifully, he never reverted to the subject. The little means that kept him alive was no great concern to him or to her. His thankfulness was for her companionship. Her feeling toward him was reverence and love. Never by any act did she remind him that it was she who maintained his poor household. To contemplate herself as almsgiver, with him as the object, would have been to her as a temptation from the fiend. She could no more have put a piece of money in his hand than she could have laughed at his patriotism.

On her taking leave of the Professor, he would say: "When are you coming again?" At her next visit his greeting would be: "Ah! now we shall both speak out our thoughts."

One day she left her photograph against the lamp on his table. "Ah," he said, "now I shall have you with me always."

The two came to know each other so well that they could sit together and not talk. He would turn his eyes from the window, gaze steadily at her, and silently beam upon her. She would sit with her arms folded and look across the room at him or at his bookshelves, in contemplation.

One day when the conversation had been of his far-away, boyhood's home he took her hand and held it a long time. He spoke again of his mother and sisters, tears running down his cheeks. In the home, he said, there grows that in a man which never dies if he lives a hundred years. Some term it a sweet and softening influence; others speak of it as a tender plant that binds hearts. But it has no name; in no figure of speech can it find description. Only in one's best moments can it be felt. Then it brings tears, not of joy or of sorrow, but from the sharpness of reagitated affections and of memories bitter-sweet.

Miss Edwin's visits to the old man were repeated for more than a year. Then one morning the message came for which she had long been prepared. The postman brought her a letter telling her the Professor had died the night before. A pressure at her heart left a sharp pain. Her grief was as for the loss of what could never be found again.

The letter had been written by a French waiter, a man from M. Droumont's native town, who had of late come sometimes to see him. One wish of the aged man had been fulfilled, the letter said. He had passed away when alone.

Nearly enough to bury him was collected among his former pupils. What was then lacking was made up by Miss Edwin.

At the funeral six friends of the dead man attended. Up on the box of the first carriage sat Leon with the driver. The whole way to the cemetery the half-wit looked straight ahead at the coffin in silence. Inside the carriage, the undertaker's man and the French waiter kept up a noisy chatter. In the second carriage, Miss Edwin sat beside the French waiter's wife; facing them were a slender young clergyman in black and a slouchy German who promptly announced himself as a Socialist and an admirer of Professor Droumont.

It would fill pages to tell of the drive of this incongruous quartet to the cemetery. Seek agreement as they might, their inevitable clashings brought out a ghastly comedy. Their talk was in four tongues, each missing the import of the others' words. When they were silent, the French waiter's wife smelled at a vinaigrette, Miss Edwin looked out of the window in pensive sadness, the clergyman read a book, and the Socialist breathed noisily and scowled, as if fuming against Church and State.

The Professor's character was one of their subjects. The French waiter's wife said tartly that Monsieur

Droumont had been an aristocrat, like all of his family in France. The clergyman eulogized his learning and integrity, but regretted he had not been a professing Christian. He feared, indeed, something was lacking in the old man, since he had come to want.

The Socialist exploded:

"Somedings lackin'! Dere vos. He simply didn't recoknize t'e times, the environment he vos livin' in. He vos von hundred years in advance of dis aich. He vos alder-ruistic. Ven Socialissum comes over dis world, like anudder light over der dark aiches, t'e Provessor Drumonts will end t'eir tays in balaces, if balaces t'ere be. Ach, vot a shame it vos! Dere vos a great man, chenius and chentleman, who gafe his whole li-i-fe to oders, to die like a pauper. If t'e State hat gifen him yoost only a fife tollar a week ven past seffenty, he could haf tied like a chentlemans. How many brafе mans would do much good, forefer, t'ere long lives t'rough, if t'ey was only safe for old aich. Bah! Ach! Ve haf communistic schools for children, who can't take care of t'er selfs; why not pension der old beebles, who can't take care of t'er selfs? But dis is t'e aich of pigs, t'ieves, an' monobolists."

Miss Edwin, with nothing to say, glanced at the Socialist with sympathy.

To-day in the town cemetery, far from the tall monuments of self-vaunting wealth, is a modest headstone marking the Professor's grave. Placed there by Miss Edwin, its inscription reads:

IN MEMORY OF
PROFESSOR ALCIDE DROUMONT.
BORN MAY 2, 1810,
IN VALENCE, FRANCE.
DIED MARCH 15, 1890,
IN GERMANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.

SCHOLAR, PATRIOT, HUMANITARIAN.

"AFTER LIFE'S FITFUL FEVER HE SLEEPS
WELL."



Two Turns of a Coin.

Just before the birth of morning a little group of young swells was breaking up at a street corner after a gay night. One of the party hailed a passing car. The others shouted "Good-night" after him in a hearty chorus. And then one of the wags sent after him this parting shot:

"Ho, Schuyler! Got your car fare left?"

"Just about!" returned Schuyler as he passed into the car laughing.

An answering burst of "Ha, ha's!" came from the others.

Schuyler found himself the sole passenger. He made for the forward end of the car, so that he might not be disturbed, and chose the corner that had no lamp, to avoid oil drips. By the time the conductor came for his fare he was already half asleep. Partly aroused, he handed out a piece of money from his vest pocket. The conductor glanced at the coin, dropped it in his pocket, rang up the fare, and returned to the rear platform.

Schuyler leaned back in the corner and closed his eyes. His handsome countenance wore a good-natured smile. He was of the well dressed class. Hat, overcoat, necktie, shoes, all new, helped advertise the

fashion. The conductor, standing on the rear platform, regarded him with an envious stare. From what he had heard at the corner he gathered that this young swell had been having a night of it. And the real night of expensive pleasure is never half so hilarious and brilliant as the one pictured by those with no money to throw away. Theatre, champagne at supper, stories, and the rest of it, coarse fun or innocent, come far short of the talk about it all. But the conductor saw in Schuyler a being born to enjoyment, careless of the cost. He fancied, as he looked at the sleeper smiling, that the young man was living his gay night again in dreamland. Ah! thought the conductor, pleasure is indeed pleasure to the rich. First, if money can buy a good time, they are sure of it. They first anticipate it. Then they partake of it. Afterward, they recall it. Nay, they may even dream it over, too. And new pleasures are at their command every day.

Another passenger came into the car. He took the seat opposite Schuyler, under the lamp. The conductor after giving him one glance paid no further attention to him. Nothing in that fellow to rouse envy or even curiosity. He was poorer looking than the conductor himself.

Schuyler got off at a corner where he could take a cross line running to a fashionable quarter. As he passed out the door, the conductor said:

"Been having a good time?"

Schuyler smiled, sleepily.

"A ripping good time, Out of sight!" And he jumped off the car.

The answer made the conductor still more unhappy. Often he had stopped his car on that corner to let off richly dressed people who were on their way to the pleasant streets beyond. No need to tell him that in fifteen minutes Schuyler would be in a warm bed in a fine house, to sleep to a late hour if he wished to. How free is the life of the wealthy! Why, the young fellow had handed out his nickel fare without even a look at it.

The conductor was right; Schuyler was free from carking care. In a quarter of an hour he was in his well furnished apartments, going to bed. He smiled still as he recalled his gay night with the jolly crowd. On winding up his watch, as usual on going to bed, he emptied his vest pockets on a table. With knife, lead pencils, eye-glass case, came only one piece of money. It was a nickel.

"Only a nickel left! Well, by Jove!" He laughed. The fact but amused him. "Somehow, I thought I had a gold coin, too. If I've lost it, the finder's welcome. I've had a good time."

Whatever his loss, it never entered his mind again. In two minutes he was asleep.

When Schuyler had left the car the conductor went forward to collect the poor looking passenger's fare. The man tendered him a ten-cent piece that he had been fumbling. The conductor pausing to examine it, the man followed his movement with anxious eyes. The conductor said:

"I don't believe this dime's good."

"It's got to be good," exclaimed the man, "else I

must walk down town. It's all the money I have!"

"Well, all right," was the reply, "I'll shove it off on somebody else."

The conductor handed the poor passenger the change—a five-cent piece which he took from his coin pocket. The probably spurious dime occupying his attention, he gave no heed to the nickel change. And the poor man, disturbed yet over his prospect of walking four miles, dropped it into his trousers pocket without looking at it.

The passenger was up thus before daybreak to look for work. Walking down town would have involved not only the fatigue of a long tramp, but the probability of missing his chance for a job. He needed work, needed it badly.

That poor passenger was going without an overcoat this chill winter morning; his clothes were sadly worn; his breakfast had been oatmeal porridge, with hot water as a drink. But to these stings of poverty, real as they were, he gave no thought. His were the deeper sufferings that attend privation. His worst worry was his family. Work at his trade had been slack. He had tried for other employment, but had failed. He had fought off destitution, but despite his every effort it had come upon him. Half his last dime had just gone in car fare. He feared that the coming day would tell the old story—no work.

But other griefs were eating at his heart. Disappointment had seized upon him when his cherished plans for his children broke down. It was a humiliation to him as a man and a workman that his wife

should be denied the comforts she had the right to expect. He swallowed gall and wormwood every time he met a fellow workman who pitied him. He resented the meddling of alms-mongers in his affairs. Looking over his past life, and seeing no more evil in it than that done by the average of men, he asked why he should be so hard pushed. Thus was he harassed this morning—faint from underfeeding, in the shadow of greater ills to come, and with rankling injuries in his breast.

This thin, pale man, sitting in the street car as the day dawned, looked down in sadness as his busy brain added to his griefs. He asked himself in vain where he might raise a dollar should he fail to get work. Nothing further could he pawn; landlord and other creditors had secured themselves on his furniture, and all the clothes of the household that could be spared were already gone. He knew not where to turn to borrow. He was helpless in the world, without a place to call his own, without a single day's independent purchase on life.

A man in this situation is prey to pain that becomes appalling. Beyond the faintness of starvation, beyond the haunting dreads that unman him, even beyond the horrors of impious suggestion, another ill of mind and body seizes him. It is no less than an agony. At first coming it startles him, so strange is it, so different from every other feeling he has ever experienced. It cannot be shaken off. It brings him to feel himself lost, alone, condemned, cut off from human kind. While all other living things seem parts to rounded

nature, sharing in a universal sympathy and aim, he, chilled at heart, done for, sees himself an outcast. By turns and suddenly he is hot, cold—in perspiration, in ice—nauseated, hysterical. Utter despair often comes over men thus beset and driven. Many then sever the thin thread that ties them to the earth.

“Going to work, Billy?” a careless voice brought our passenger to a sense of his surroundings. Seated near him he saw a former shopmate, a lucky competitor for a good place.

“N-n—Yes!” he answered. “Yes, of course! Yes!”

In a moment he reproached himself for his weakness. He quit the car, to get away from the man. He walked the last half-mile down town.

For hours he went from shop to shop, but there was no work to be had at his trade. He copied from the newspaper bulletin boards such addresses as promised him anything. The rest of the long day he wandered about the business districts seeking any kind of a job. But the result was the same as for weeks. No work.

Toward evening, being faint, he quailed before the long walk home. He mechanically turned over and over the nickel in his trousers pocket, as he had done at the dinner hour, when tempted to get a bite to eat. But the children’s loaf must be provided even if he should starve. He started to walk home.

He walked the whole way. He dragged himself along for nearly two hours. He kept reckoning up the distance he had gone and counting the number of squares he had yet to go. Now he had done a tenth

of the way; now an eighth; now a sixth; now half the way; and so on. He could not help counting his steps, as if that helped him, but he always lost the number. When his home block came in view he feared he should fall, through weakness.

On entering his home that hapless wight acted the part of a man. He smiled and kissed his wife and children.

"No work yet," he said in a voice as strong as he could command. "But at two places they gave me hopes."

He forebore saying how slight those hopes were.

His wife had a piece of news. A letter had come during the day offering him work. But the town where the work was to be done was eighty miles away. The car fare was two dollars. With not a cent to be had, the offer was a mockery.

The wife said the last crumb of bread was gone. "Here's five cents," he replied. "Go buy a loaf." He handed out the nickel he had fingered half the day. The woman went to the baker's. The husband sat and looked at the two children. What was to become of them?

In a few minutes the wife returned. She hurried in, leaving the door open behind her. The husband saw she was excited. Her eyes stared wildly. Her cheeks were flushed.

"Billy!" she cried. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"Tell you what?"

"Why, I came near not knowing it. When the baker woman gave me the bread I put down the

money and started for the door, when she says: 'I don't know whether I can change this.' 'Change it?' I says. 'Yes,' says she. And I stood dumfounded while she counted out four dollars and ninety-five cents. Your nickel was a five-dollar gold-piece!"

Billy winced. He caught his breath. His pale face flushed. Recovering, but still amazed, he reflected and reached a conclusion. The conductor had given him that gold-piece in the morning by mistake.

He kept his mouth shut.

"Providence sent us that money!" fervently said the wife. "Where did you get it?"

Billy was weighing restitution. The conductor would not be a loser, since he was making his first trip of the day, and the well-dressed man was his first passenger. Yes; that young swell who spoke of a ripping good time had given the conductor the gold-piece. No, Billy quickly decided, returning the money was not to be thought of.

"Where did you get it?" asked the wife again.

"Providence sent it. Payment of an old debt."

"And you surprised me so!" cried the wife, fairly panting. "Well, you always was great on big surprises. I ordered half a dollar's worth of groceries and things, and we'll all eat our fill good."

"And I can go and take the job the letter promised me!" joined in Billy.

"Oh," resumed the hopeful wife, joyfully, "I just knew things must come out all right!"

Billy made no answer. His wife was satisfied; so

far, so good. But in his heart, sore from savage rents, was this echo of his thoughts:

"Things all right! What to another man is an unconsidered trifle is to me and mine our earthly salvation! Are things all right?"



John Breit.

I had a shock to-day—the kind of shock that makes a man stop and think. What caused it was on the surface nothing more than the merest everyday incident in my life as a newspaper man; yet the more I reflect on the matter the more are my feelings jarred, and as I gaze backward on the merciless and ever-tossing sea of time, the more do I wonder.

Only through knowing well the two leading actors in the little drama could I have been affected by it as I am. I was in position to read their feelings, to penetrate—but let the story tell itself.

Ten years ago—can it be so long? it seems hardly two—I was a deskman on a broadside evening newspaper in a western city. The paper was doing well, and its owner, a self-made man, was otherwise advancing his fortunes—a fact he never exerted himself to suppress. His policy with his newspaper was simple: to run it as a political organ, to spend money freely in gathering news, and to bestow flattering attention upon his advertisers. That policy had paid. The paper now talked of itself as old, established, and prosperous. The owner, with his name on the editorial page, regarded himself as a great man in the city, and his family aimed at moving in the first circle of our local society.

That the family were climbing the ladder of caste first became apparent in the drift of certain orders issued to our staff. The paper was to be toned up. More space was to be given to society gossip. Art, the drama, the clubs, the fashionable churches—topics such as these were to replace our divorce court stories and our spicy interviews with the heroes of the fistic arena.

This toning up failed to please the managing editor, who liked the rough things of the world. He resigned and went off to Leadville, there to write current history of the frontier and to speculate in silver mines and town lots and cards.

A new managing editor was brought on from Boston. When he arrived the owner announced to the staff that his new importation, who was to be known as editor-in-chief, would proceed to impart to the paper a still higher tone. In this aim, the moneyed-man said, he and his editor were in cordial agreement.

It took us a little while to settle into our places under the changed regime. But the new chief was a patient man, and before long the reconstructed machine was running smoothly. We learned to appreciate the Bostonian's talents and to admire him for certain of his qualities. If we were to have a refined aristocrat over us, he was the least objectionable of his class. In person he was fine looking. He was about thirty-five, with good features and an expression serious and not unkind. He was system itself, and his demeanor in the office was strictly that of a man of business. He came in the morning at a regular hour,

went direct to his private room, and there attended to all his work. When he wanted to consult with one of the staff or to lecture the head of a department, he rang a silver table-gong for an office boy and through him invited the man he wished to see to come to his room. Then, courteously, he would lead the talk and when business was finished cut it short. On taking the helm he laid down his rules for each department, saying he would hold the heads responsible and would not interfere in details. What he soon did in the case of the city editor served as admonition to the rest. Him he dismissed for persistently ignoring the orders to tone up the local news pages.

A faithful worker, this new chief. His abilities lay just in the direction the owner wished the paper to take. He knew the English classics like the alphabet, so it seemed to us chance scribblers. His leaders were rich in those references to authors, from Chaucer to Tennyson, which touch the memories of the few who have read and tickle the fancy of the many who have not. In art, his tastes were exacting, and many a time did his little gong ring for a word with our breezy, bushy-headed art critic; and to him he imparted advice and information—him whose loads of trash had once been dumped into the paper unquestioned. A Shakespearean star coming to town, our dramatic writer was left to report a variety show, while the chief himself sat in judgment on the tragedy and sent us in a column that was a model in elegance and finish. But his neatest work was in the treatment of local society—our owner's beau monde. This new man was

soon "up" in its traditions, its personal histories, its degrees of family precedence, even its gossip, and he showed fine tact in availing himself of this knowledge. The particular merits of each self-made citizen found due mention at his hands, while upon the alumni of the western colleges he shed some of the lustre of their cherished seats of learning. He knew the precise point at which the educated like flattery to cease. He had apparently made a study both of the old American families of our city and of the new rich aspirants to familyhood, and he allowed delicate little allusions to lineage and to business talent alike to creep into our news articles. In brief, our new editor made the paper the medium for what the cream of our city called "our set." And soon the owner of the paper, and his wife, and sons, and daughters, flourished as lords and ladies to the manner born in the charmed circle of our upper ten hundred. The editor and his wife went along with them, of course.

The socio-labor question never found space in our columns in those days save as to the phase presented by charity. Our new editor preached the obligation of almsgiving and made duty a pleasure to contributors towards sweet charity by publishing their names and gifts, often.

Our chief was an earnest man. His conception of a good newspaper was no outcome of mere policy. He did as he did simply because he deemed it right and natural and the only true thing to be done. To him people of wealth and education were the best people. As a class they were capable of appreciating the

intellectual, and then he addressed feeling that he was understood. His mental cultivation lifting him above the interests of the vulgar, he would never bend his philosophic dignity by pandering to such as they. The study of the better classes—their enterprises, their code of social ethics, their literary and other pursuits, their pleasures, even—this was sober work for him. To be the mouthpiece of our aristocracy, editor-in-chief of their favorite paper, this to him was being nothing less than a distinguished and honorable leader of men.

He firmly believed that there are men chosen and men unchosen. In much that came from his pen lurked the thought that evolution unerringly brings the best character to the top. The poor and ignorant, it was true, were to be pitied. To some degree of consideration they were entitled, but social dregs they were by birth, and dregs would they remain. Though he may not have given this belief blunt expression, it leaked out between his lines.

In those days we had trouble with our editorial office boys. The force of boys was three, and about every second week the whole force was discharged. The hiring of these boys was left to the man who did janitor's work and called himself superintendent of the building. An accommodating chap, he would dismiss a boy if a department head growled at one and even if the chief was obliged to ring twice in calling for one. The chief himself never seemed to know one boy from another. In giving orders he simply said, "Boy," without looking at the messenger. At Christ-

mas, however, he gave a lucky young rascal, who had been but two days in the office, a five-dollar bill.

I remember well the day ragged Johnny Breit came seeking a job. He stood awkwardly before the janitor-superintendent, crushing his old slouch hat nervously against his hip, and trying to convince his majestic questioner that he was honest, industrious, and intelligent. A place being vacant, he was put to work. Five minutes after slowly mounting the stairs with his heart in his mouth seeking employment, he was speeding down on an errand with the air of an employé of a great newspaper.

Those of us who paid any attention to Johnny Breit accepted it as a certainty that he would lose his place at the end of the first week. In a day or two, when his shyness had worn off, he showed himself as wild as a colt. Noisy, loaferish, slovenly, he had never heard of manners. And promptly, at the end of the week, the janitor packed him off. It happened that just as his "boss," as he called the janitor, was handing him his pay envelope, and telling him in the set phrase that "his services would no longer be required," the editor-in-chief was passing out on his way home. Johnny burst into a bawl. To the amusement of the deskmen, he ran after the chief and went down stairs beside the great man, crying and pleading and gesticulating.

On Monday morning the chief rang in the janitor-superintendent. He hoped, he said, not to interfere with necessary discipline, but as the lad who had been discharged had told him of poverty and sickness at home, he would ask if leniency could be shown in the

case it might be done. So when Johnny came in a while later he was re-engaged.

The boy kept his place. In time it became known that he was German by birth and was seventeen years old, that he had been working in a factory down East from the age of twelve, and that he had come West with his widowed mother and two young sisters, who hoped for much in the newer country. His hard knocks moving us to compassion, we overlooked his uncouthness, and he became a fixture in the office.

In a short while Johnny was senior office boy. Here he developed a point. He managed to make his juniors believe that it was his duty to remain in the office, attending door and answering editors' bells, while they were to run the errands outside. He soon grew stout, almost fat. He picked up a few civilized tricks. He put new clothes on his dumpy body and short legs, and kept his face nearly clean. He learned to meet callers with the servant air of formal civility, to impress them with the importance of our paper. But it was not in him to polish himself further. The staff got to tolerate him as something better than a new boy and much worse than a good one. Sometimes he was impudent, sometimes airy; he even banded words with the mighty janitor. But he managed to stay.

Johnny Breit held his place for several years. He grew to be a fellow of strong animal spirits—bustling, pushing, moving about with clattering feet. The range of his interests was narrow. Opening the good journals and magazines that came by mail, he knew

only their names. The grand topics of our grand newspaper were as nothing to him. His sensations were the coarse ones enjoyed by the budding sports of the street and the baseball field. He was executive, not pensive. His life was events. The only trait that possibly indicated some fine instinct in him was his love of the theatre. He usually spent his evenings at a place of amusement, passing in free on office tickets. His daily companions were supers and small-fry actors. In the office he repeated green-room gossip, this becoming a settled habit when one of the reporters gave him a dollar once for a morsel of tattle and laughingly told him he had in him the making of a theatrical manager.

For about four years our paper occupied the giddy height of society's own. Then it experienced a turn. The owner died. Executors took hold of it, and divided councils injured it. Finally, the widow sold it. The new proprietor, a practical politician and driving business man, permitted our editor-in-chief to retire. His successor was a robustious writer with insight into the tastes of the masses. Thereupon the paper again took to astonisher heads, and rough pictures, and columns about the pretty divorced blonde and the champion pugilist.

Our chief found no vacant position awaiting his lofty talent in our Western city. No rising millionaire was entering our upper circles via polite journalism. So he gave up the fine house he had rented and went East with his wife and three little ones, and, rumor said, very little cash. It had cost him his full salary to be a social lion.

Johnny Breit left us about the same time, going to be a super. Soon afterward we heard he had become a sort of agent or secretary with a female variety show.

I floated to another large Western city, and here in it to-day, after an interval of five years, I again saw Johnny Breit and my old chief. This morning I received an assignment to interview the German opera company's agent, who with certain celebrated singers was to arrive at the Union railway station. On my way I met in the street car a newspaper acquaintance, bound on the same errand for a rival journal. Full of gossip about people we had known, he had news of my old chief. That Curtis of Western journalism, he said, on going back East had found no steady employment suited to his finicky pen. For a time he tried magazine writing and similar precarious work. But he found it hard to support wife and babes, the ink-wasters in good positions not giving way to let great talent improve upon their work. In a year he came West again, went "away out West," and once more he "missed it." He had lost his grip on the run of good things. And what did I think he was doing now? Well, reporting and syndicating, taking odd jobs anywhere.

We left the car at the terminus hotel, to wait there until the train came in with the stars. As we were passing in at the main door a couple with three children were entering in front of us. In pushing the door open, the man half turned. It was my former chief. We shook hands. He was going to leave his family in the ladies' parlor, he said, while he attended

to some business. He had brought them out for a walk. A glance at the party told much. The wife's clothing, though neat enough, was of a style more than one season old. Her children's costumes were for wear, and not such as her fastidious taste had demanded a few years before. The father was in a suit I had seen before. He looked thin.

My fellow reporter and I put in the time together in the hotel until the express arrived. Then to work. When the train moved into the station we were in a knot of reporters who had collected to interview the great German singers. As the latter and their party filed out of a sleeping-car, a polite attendant told us that the stars knew no English, but that the assistant manager, who spoke German, would be pleased to meet the gentlemen of the press immediately in the ladies' parlor of the hotel close by and introduce them to the singers.

As I turned away, I encountered my old chief, notebook in hand. His business, then, was the interview we were all after. He walked back with our group to the hotel, quiet while the rest of us chattered noisily. On the way I fell in with the assistant manager's attendant. He obligingly gave me points about his party. He spelled the names of the stars and the managers. The assistant manager, he said, was a pushing man of business. He was accompanied by his two sisters. One had lately been married to a wealthy German wholesale butcher. The other was engaged to a basso, who was a baron. A very fine family, indeed.

When the reporters reached the ladies' parlor, the

great German stars—two stout women and two broom-bearded men—were already there, waiting to be interviewed. With them, attired in furs and silks, were two young women in whose broad features I discerned a familiar something. Behind them, partly hidden by the curtains of a window, was our former chief's wife; close against her their three little ones, looking shy. Just as the reporters had done trooping in at one door, in briskly walked at another Assistant Manager Mr. John Breit.

After giving us a business man's nod, he talked rapidly in German with the stars. Presently he said to us:

"There ain't none of you gents kin talk German, is there?"

After a moment's silence I heard my old chief's voice behind me:

"I can."

Mr. John Breit said:

"Well, you kin talk English to the reporters and German to the attractions. I ain't very used to the interviewer business, though I'm an old newspaper man myself."

The editor moved forward, and as he did so, Johnny Breit, his voice pitched high in surprise, burst out:

"Why, how do you do?"

They shook hands, stout Mr. John Breit, in fine cloth and diamonds, and the broken down editor, in worn clothes and looking pale and thin.

"I've had big luck the last three seasons on the road," Breit said to the chief. And then to us: "Put

that in the papers, boys; and you can bet this here opera's going to be something monstrous!"

The chief put questions to the stars in fluent German and interpreted the replies to the reporters in even and patient tones, though some of the information the scribblers sought must have astonished the foreigners. While this was going on refreshments were brought in. John Breit made a little speech.

"My regards, gentlemen! I'm a-doin' this layout because of my regards for the two perfessions. You'll find this here champagne an A1 hit."

Playing host generously, he invited every one to eat and drink. He looked around to see that all were served. Observing the three little ones trying, in obedience to their mother, to look out of the window, but glancing sidewise at the good things, he carried them platefuls of cake and sandwiches. He failed to recognize the children, but in him their mother saw the rough office boy who a few years before had sometimes carried messages to her. She spoke a faint "Thank you" and turned her head away and looked out in the street. The children ate as if hungry.

The editor was still interviewing the singers. His voice grew husky and low, and once or twice it seemed tremulous. He declined to join us in our drinking.

The business ended, Mr. John Breit bowed us out with boisterous good cheer. He expected much, he said, from his staunch friends of the press.

I was the last among the reporters to go down stairs. In the hotel lobby my old chief approached me. He wanted a word with me aside. When we

were alone, he asked me, without any circumlocution, for the loan of five dollars. He might perhaps have talked on, but to hear him was more than I could bear. I thrust a bill in his hand and walked away.

As I have said, this happened to-day—to-day in the morning newspaper man's sense; for it is 3 a. m., and only now am I going to bed. I came away from the office an hour ago, and on the car was the city editor of one of the other papers. We talked over the night's news and work. He asked me what I had written up. I said the German stars.

"Yes," he remarked, "we had a new man doing it for us, and the stuff he turned in was as staid and elegant as a magazine essay. It was too finished! I had to fake some life into it."

And thus have I been shocked, and thus have I been recalling the past and reflecting. In a confused way I am striving to trace the events that brought about the blooming of John Breit and the circumstances in which my old chief was withered. How often what seems positive strength turns out in this world to be weakness! And contemptible feebleness may, in changed conditions, develop the needed force to attain success.

To-day my old chief knows full well how false was his once cherished scheme of the social fabric; and John Breit, who never dreamed of social scheme, faulty or otherwise, is moneyed and happy.

Did I Do Wrong?

I was yet quite a young man—it was nearly twenty years ago—when our firm in Boston decided to send me to London on a matter of business. On its becoming known through office and factory that I was to cross the water, more than an ordinary interest was shown in me. From intimates came suggestions; from elders advice; from the crowd congratulations. One day, while passing through our packing rooms, I was asked by a young porter, an Englishman, if I would accept a letter of introduction from him to his father in London. I of course said yes. Just before I sailed the young fellow handed me the letter, saying he gave it in return for some kindnesses I had shown him, and adding that I should find his father a different man from what I might expect, judging by the son. The truth was, drink had the best of young Mumford and was keeping him down in the world.

When I had been in London a fortnight I began to feel lonesome. I was at a hotel. I had been brought only into commercial relations with the great firms with which I was dealing, and otherwise I had not been launched into the social life I desired. Some of my new acquaintances went at a pace too fast, some lived far in the country, some were too old for me. So I was seeing London almost as a stranger. Then

it happened one morning that I recollected young Mumford's letter. I took it out of my trunk, and seeing by the address that his father's place of employment was not far away, I walked over to call on the old gentleman.

On asking for Mr. Mumford I was directed to the office. There a junior clerk conducted me to an inner room, telling me that Mr. Mumford was chief clerk. He handed my card to a man of gentlemanly bearing seated at a desk, and then went out. It was Mr. Mumford. He greeted me pleasantly. He had been expecting me, he said, his son Albert having advised him by letter of the time of my arrival.

He offered to find me lodgings and show me about town. I gratefully accepted his courtesies. He proved generous and intelligent, spent much time with me and made my visit to London pleasant. As a man of ripened experience, he found enjoyment in revisiting the sights of the great city and describing to me the institutions of old England. Indeed, among the many introductions by letter given me in the course of my life that to him was one of the few that led to the happy results anticipated by the writers.

On my return to Boston, correspondence passed between the elder Mumford and me for several years. Then his letters ceased. Meantime, the son had wandered off, his habits unimproved. I had heard nothing of either in a long time, when one day, a few years ago, young Mumford, looking seedy, accosted me in the street and asked for assistance. His father, he told me, had died three or four years before, leaving him,

the only relative, about a thousand dollars. This sum he had speedily squandered. He was now a tramp.

A few weeks later I read of the death of an Albert Mumford in a charity hospital, and on going to the place I found the dead man to be my old fellow employé. He had died a stranger among strangers. If any one in the world, relative or friend, cared aught for him, no one at the hospital or among the men of our house knew of the fact.

Not long after, I was sent to London again. Finding myself one day near Mr. Mumford's old place of employment, I went in. I inquired of a clerk if the late Mr. Mumford had left any relatives in London; if so, I said, I desired to be put in communication with them. The clerk believed that Mr. Mumford had left no one but his son; his successor in the chief clerkship had taken charge of his effects and seen to his funeral; no kith or kin had ever turned up in London. However, he would call the chief clerk. At this moment a man who had been regarding us with a frown from the other end of the office—in fact from the door of what had been Mr. Mumford's private room—came forward and brusquely inquired what I wanted to know about Mr. Mumford. The young clerk repeated to him my questions, said to me that this was the new chief clerk, and went back to his desk.

"What do you want to know about John Mumford's relatives?" asked the man, sharply.

"I merely wished to know if he left any."

"Are you a solicitor?"

"No, sir."

"Well, what is it you are after?"

"Albert Mumford, John Mumford's son, died recently in America. I wish to apprise his relatives of the fact, if any survive him."

"Well, there are none. I had Mr. Mumford buried. He left but few effects. I had them sold and I sent the proceeds to Albert, in Boston. What have you got to do about it?"

"Nothing."

The man was glaring at me. It was evident he was not in sympathy with the sentimental character of my errand. I turned and walked away, musing on the fate of the homeless wretch who had died in a foreign land, and on the death of his good father, who had left no one but his wayward son to mourn him. It seemed sad—a family line thus ended. It touched me.

What a hard man Mr. Mumford's successor seemed to be! Surely I had given him no just cause to take offense.

My lodgings were in Kensington. A few days after my visit to Mr. Mumford's old office I was in my landlady's sitting room, passing an idle half-hour in play with her two little children. They were showing me their treasures and playthings. Among these was a scrapbook, in which colored prints and bits of fancy letter-heads were pasted. In turning over the leaves I saw a lithographed design that had a familiar look. I examined it. Where had I seen it? What commercial house had used it? On the back of it, where it was pasted, were some written lines. Holding the leaf up between me and the table light, I instantly recog-

nized the handwriting. It was John Mumford's, and the letter-head was the same he had used when corresponding with me.

When, a while later, the landlady came into the room, I asked her how that letter-head had fallen into her hands. She explained that it had been left in one of her rooms, in a bundle of old letters, by a lodger. He was a Mr. Emerson, who had been in her house one summer while his family were at the seaside. On his going away she supposed he had taken all his belongings with him. But the bundle had lain a long time on an upper shelf in the clothes closet of the room he had occupied. She had come upon it only a week or two before, in house-cleaning, and, not knowing Mr. Emerson's address, had cut out some of the picture-heads for the children to play with.

I might have passed over this incident with no more than the customary reflection on coincidences and on the narrow limits of our world had not my attention been arrested by certain words in Mr. Mumford's handwriting on the back of the letter-head. These were, "the sale of my shares." They aroused in my mind a vague foreshadowing of suspicion. "Shares." What property had he, then? Who took charge of it on his death? Had the proceeds all been sent to Albert? Mr. Mumford had been buried by mere business acquaintances. Why had that chief clerk, who had handled some of his money, been so rude to me?

I asked the landlady to let me see the rest of the letters. After rummaging in her rag-bags and waste paper shelves, she produced a dozen which had been

in Emerson's bundle. They were all in Mr. Mumford's handwriting. I read them. They had been written to George Emerson, were addressed to the house in which Mr. Mumford had been employed, and were dated in the North of England, where Mr. Mumford had sought rest during his last illness. Their contents related chiefly to sales of stocks and bonds, to be made in case Mr. Mumford should not return to town by a certain date. He never returned, I knew. He had died in the North.

The next day I inserted in several London newspapers an advertisement inquiring for relatives of the late John Mumford. A week brought no reply.

About that time I was one afternoon dining in a restaurant in the city, when the young clerk I had seen at Mr. Mumford's old place came in. The youth bowed, and I invited him to my table. In the course of our talk he spoke of the head clerk's uncalled-for show of temper the day I was at the office. His chief, he said, though not a man of cordial manners, was usually polite enough. Lately, however, he had once in a while taken a drop too much, which perhaps was the case the day I saw him. It would not be fair, he thought, for me to carry away a bad impression of Mr. Emerson.

Mr. Emerson!

Before hearing the chief clerk's name I had been unable to divine the relations between John Mumford and George Emerson. Now I was beginning to see them clearly.

The next morning, taking with me Mr. Mumford's

letters, I called on Mr. Emerson. The chief clerk came out from his little room, and on seeing me stood still and looked at me in silence. I saw him grow pale. I asked him for an interview in private. He consented. When alone with him I drew a letter from my bundle and handed it to him. He took it with a show of indifference, but when he had read a few lines his eyes became fixed on the sheet of paper in terror. For a full five minutes he stared at it, trying to control himself. He was caught; he knew it; he sought a way out. His face was red; his eyelids twitched continually. At length he put the letter down, settled limp in his chair, sighed, looked helplessly about, and then, without facing me, asked:

"Well?"

"Mr. Emerson," I said, gently, perhaps you might wish to speak with me elsewhere."

"I don't know." His voice was faint.

I waited a while. He took a card from a note-book.

"Could you come there?" he said, giving me the card, "and I will talk with you."

"When?"

He thought a moment.

"Let us go now."

He called a hansom. We drove to a railway station and were soon in the suburbs. We left the train at a pretty village. He conducted me to a small but pleasant house, surrounded by neat grounds. On the way neither of us had spoken.

"This is where I live," he said plaintively, as we passed in at the gateway. A servant girl who met us

in the hall he directed to call Mrs. Emerson. We went to the drawing room. When the wife came in he introduced me. Then he asked for the children. Four were brought in, to be presented to the visitor. Mrs. Emerson was a lady of kindly manners; the children, without exception, were bright, pretty, and winsome. Soon Emerson dismissed them all. Alone with me, he said, with a pathetic wave of his hand toward the door out of which they had passed:

"Well? Am I to go to jail?"

"How much," I asked, "did you get of John Mumford's money?"

"Six hundred pounds."

"Why did you take it?"

"He was dead. His son, the sole heir, was a vagabond. I first sent him a hundred and fifty pounds. In a few weeks he wrote me it was all gone. I sent fifty more. Soon he asked again for a remittance. To give him money seemed to me worse than throwing it in the Thames. I thought of the good it would do me and my family. I sent him ten pounds, telling him it was all that was due him. I never heard from him afterward. Had he written again perhaps I would have sent him more."

"Did you try to find other relatives?"

"I did. I advertised. No one ever appeared."

"What did you do with the money?"

"I paid debts incurred while I was a struggling underclerk, with an increasing family. Then I moved to this house, to this neighborhood, where I might see my children growing up among the right sort of people."

"If I do not have you arrested, will you try to restore the money to its lawful owners?"

"Gladly. But to get that sum will require time. I shall have to make sacrifices."

With this understanding I left him. Afterward, I went to his office several times, and on each occasion he showed me proofs of the search he was making for John Mumford's heirs.

It was after one of these calls that I again happened one day to meet the young clerk at the restaurant where he dined. From my visits to the office he had gained the impression that Emerson and I had become friends, and he spoke of his senior favorably. Emerson, he said, was not a favorite with the employés, being subject, especially of late, to both moody fits and outbursts of temper. But he was far from being unkind or unjust. One act of generous protection he had performed toward an erring creature which few men in a place of responsibility would have risked. As I was a stranger to the firm and a friend of Mr. Emerson, he would relate to me the incident. He himself had detected one of the errand boys in stealing a small sum of money, he had been obliged by his duty to report the fact to Mr. Emerson, and the lad had confessed to his guilt. The boy cried bitterly and declared he had given the money to his widowed mother as extra earnings. Mr. Emerson, on ascertaining that this was true, had himself made good the slight loss to the firm, and, inducing the clerk to keep the matter quiet, had retained the boy and exercised a watchful care over him ever since.

My time for leaving London was close at hand. For several days, in my unoccupied moments, I turned Emerson's case over in my mind. Our talks in his office taking place under restraint, I drove out to his house early one morning, to go over the matter with him there. I found him at home. On seeing me he was alarmed. Of late he had been pale and worn.

He told me he sincerely hoped I was convinced he was employing all means possible to find the rightful heirs, if any there were. He had new proofs of his exertions in that direction. Besides, he had already set about raising money to discharge the debt. He produced a bank book in which were recent entries of deposits, to make which I saw must have caused a drain on his resources. He hoped I would put off delivering him over to justice as long as my conscience would permit. With his moderate salary, however, a long time would be necessary to replace what he had taken. He would have to give up his pretty cottage, move into a less desirable neighborhood, surrender the hope of keeping his boys at school and put them out to work at the earliest age possible.

"I don't believe there are any heirs to be found," I said.

"What am I to do, then?" he asked. "I am willing to give the money to any charity you may name. By such an act I shall in part pay the penalty of my crime, and my children will escape the stigma of having a dishonest father."

I walked up and down the room reflecting. Mean-

time, I heard his wife sending the children off to school. She kissed them and gave them little parting admonitions, they responding with childhood's warmth and love. Emerson's home, his hopes, his temptation, his penalties—all were here before me. He went on asking for mercy.

"I trust," he said, "that at all events you will wait patiently to see what I can do before you decide to hand me over to the law."

"The law, Emerson!" I echoed. "Hand you over to the law? The law would blast your life! The law would imprison you, crush your wife and destroy the future of your innocent children. It would harden the hearts of your employers and rouse their suspicion of your fellow clerks. The law would make you an object of scandal, without adding a single terror to evil doers, and without reducing by a jot the sum of social theft. I'll risk doing justice and charity at one stroke, and be done with this affair. In a few days I am going back to America, and I shall likely never see you again. These letters are the only evidence against you on earth. Here; take them and destroy them."

I put the package on the table in front of him. He looked at it and then at me. When he fully understood me, he dropped upon a chair, bowed his head, broke down, and wept convulsively.

Through my weakness, there is in England a thief at large, unpunished by the law. Through my fault, his family is united and happy, his children are at

school instead of slaving in a factory, and he is respected as an honest man.

But one moment, friend! If I am ever tried as accessory to this man's crime I shall demand for my jury men of fifty years who know the world.



Partners in Politics.

I suppose I may now regard myself as a stranded statesman—a stranded ward statesman. For the time being, at any rate, I am laid up at a seaside cottage, fighting off an attack of rheumatism. This evening the weather is chilly, and I am seated in front of a wood fire in an open hearth and musing. Pictures of my past political life are floating before me or rolling upward with the smoke, to disappear in the chimney. Memories of two old friends most press upon my mind. One of these men I helped to bury last month; the other passed over to the silent majority a good five years ago. Their forms flit before my vision to-night!

These two men and myself formed a spike-team that for years pulled together in city politics. We three saw the shams of society and the tricks of law-giving as only politicians can.

Yes, death has broken up our little—circle; enemies called it ring. I am left without motive to form another. Of this world's goods I have sufficient; of my old cronies many are scattered—some emigrating to Canada hurriedly; some being anchored here by the law. Having been exposed to storms of public abuse recently, I appreciate my haven here.

How well I recall the beginning of my long intimacy

with my two comrades. It dated from the day we agreed to take up with politics, to tie to one another, and to be honest. That compact was made in this very room; for this seaside cottage was my father's, here I was brought up, and here since living in the city I have often come to spend my summers.

I can see that little group of three as we sat by the table here—let me see,—it was fifteen years ago. Beyond the hanging lamp there sat Hogan—short, square-built, red-faced, bullet-headed, sandy-haired. A picture of animal force; humor and shrewdness ever lurking in his small grey eyes; quick of repartee; comfortable in his set expression of countenance. And yet he was the first among us to pass over the dark river! At the end of the table sat Mortimer—tall, slender, his hair dark and curly, his eyes large and deep blue. Ah! They were a fine pair, those two, for men are often best matched when unlike.

We had been talking over the political situation in the city—the situation in practical politics. There had just taken place what the newspapers called a great reform. A very able political leader had been jailed, and the multitude was enjoying a needed rest after its virtuous spasm. We three reviewed this supreme reform. We carefully studied the shape in which it had left practical politics.

It was evident that the many lieutenants of the great man in jail had seen the last of their usefulness to the party. They were sharers in his ill luck. Yes; that was all. Luck was against them. Had that leader been able to avoid the clutches of the law, and to re-

tain office and provide well for his lieutenants, these men might have borne up under a share of his guilt; but with him arrested, tried, convicted, sentenced, imprisoned, and deserted by the press, they had to go down with him. Why? Because liberal with city funds? Nonsense. That fact had been known before. They must retire because their party could ill afford, by maintaining them in office, to defy the talents of its enemies for applying opprobrious epithets. Political managers are little influenced by such abstractions as right and wrong. What they do fear is the club their opponents wield. So the new leaders of our party had deemed it best to let many a good old worker go by the board.

What could our profit be in the great reform? We three were young and energetic. We were citizens of unimpeached integrity, of which class none too many were just at that juncture in our party. Vacancies existed high in its councils. Among us we could organize, speechify, and manage detail work. The outlook promised abundant private revenue for us, even under a modified form of practical politics; for the vanishing order had more than smacked of highwaymen's methods. The business of politics was far from being played out. Barefaced jobbery and plunder might be things of the past, but in the future we could still see many fat offices, round assessments for necessary election expenses, contributions from wealthy office seekers—in a word, patronage, perquisites and emoluments. A fine opening, indeed, existed for reform politicians—for honest men like us three. We

had each strong points. Mortimer, with his elocutionist's voice and command of sounding phrases, could make a showy formal address. His sober demeanor was sure to invite the faith of solid taxpayers. Hogan needed only to show his face among the boys to give them an impression in his favor. And his songs, his stories and extemporaneous quips would carry him through to success anywhere. Hogan was by nature one of the boys.

These two chums of mine were each at that time about twenty-five years of age. Their fathers were a little tired of paying their way. They themselves were willing to work at something not too hard. As for myself, I was by fifteen years their senior. Then, as now, I was slow to take a step before knowing whither it might lead, but I was looking around for something to do. Thus circumstances conspired to lead us into politics as partners.

In this room, then, on that evening, we came to an understanding. We were to enter upon our business as sensible men. We should, of course, be obliged to take the whole dose of politics—the bosses, the gang, the heelers, with pipe-laying, wire-pulling, assessment-paying, and the providing of work for poor voters, and the taking of spoils when victors. But we would run the machine honestly. To that we fully made up our minds.

In our ensuing talk we discussed the character of an ideal permanently successful politician. Did ever a narrow, small-souled, solemn-visaged man play the true politician's part? Never. Or a coward, a slow-

coach, a goody-goody, a Miss Nancy? Or a talkative featherhead, or a prig eaten up with egotism, or a petty tyrant? Not one of these. To be a power among one's fellows, to head a heterogeneous crowd, a man must be a man. Leadership goes with varied and positive qualities.

We pitched our notions high, we three. Politicians? No; statesmen we were to be, cosmopolitan in spirit, knowing no prejudice against any class of men—who voted! To cultivate graces in speech and manner would be our pleasure. To be generous (with party funds), to speak up for the public good (and mean something of it), to listen sympathetically to the plaint of the taxpayer. to put our names on the subscription for the poor widow—all this programme would be ours as broad-gauge politicians. And as far as the American system would permit, we should ever uphold reform.

To work, then, at once, for our party, our country—and ourselves. We planned the reorganization of our ward club. We would put ourselves in its foremost places. We named our aides. We set up combinations on the spot. We sent certain dangerous ambitious heads into the basket. This serious business mapped out, we grew mirthful. Hogan drew up a curriculum for our political academy. In studying our election districts, here was our geography; the last election returns, these our problems in arithmetic; the record of the enemy, our history to be got by rote. The moral science of our profession was how to speak much and say little, how to commit ourselves in gen-

eral and to promise nothing in particular. When the evening was over, we were ready for our launch into public life.

The next fall, as soon as the political pot began to boil, we were hard at work adding fuel. In the election we succeeded. Our career had opened auspiciously.

The years rolled away. As a powerful pair in ward politics, Mortimer and Hogan became famous. I seldom went to the front, but I was known where I wished to be and on hand when needed. If I took in less money than my partners, I also had a smaller outlay.

It occurs to me now that it was five years after our political partnership was formed when my two friends visited me here at the seaside again. Hogan, meantime married, had brought with him his wife and child. He had become heavy, and his red cheeks had grown to be big jowls. He had developed in aggressiveness; his talk ran in rough words. His clothes were of strongly contrasted colors; his bullet head was always topped with a high hat—in summer it was white, at other seasons the regulation silk. Heavy diamond rings flashed with his gestures. From his gold watch-chain dangled brilliant charms. His income from politics was fabulous, and he spent more than he made.

Mortimer had changed in a different way. More careful in his attire than Hogan, he was less showy. Not so much set up by fortune, either. Indeed, there was, so to speak, a fly in his wine. He had soared high in social life, had fallen in love, and had been rejected

in plain terms by the girl's father on the score of being a politician and a boon companion of "the notorious Hogan." Mortimer was now often lost in thought. He talked of studying law and becoming monotonously respectable.

One evening this question of respectability and all that it ought to involve—fair dealing, invariable uprightness, correct conduct—was our subject during a long talk. Hogan sat quiet until Mortimer and I had had our say. Neither of us had too high an estimate of man as he is seen where the dollar is concerned. In the light of our political experience the whole world of practical affairs was a horse market, with concealments, prevarications, and actual frauds innumerable. Hogan grew interested. On taking his turn, he preached us a little parlor sermon, dogmatically.

He had, he said, long weighed the moralities of property and politics. He believed the American people, whatever their professions and creed, in practice simply took care of themselves. Each class, with a success proportioned to its intelligence, was looking out for its own interests, and as often as possible it reached through the ballot for what it wanted. Was any one nowadays so verdant as to suppose that a legislator—Hogan was in the legislature—could perform his public duties faithfully and then rely on the dear people to send him back, in their gratitude, to keep up his spotless record for another term? No! The open or secret agents of political machines became legislators because some individual, or class or

corporation—some interest—wanted to get something from the body politic, that is, from the people as a whole. Incidentally legislators sailed the ship of state and brought her into haven in some shape. But the main purpose of the machine men ever cropped up in certain of their legislative votes or was otherwise betrayed by the line of their activities. And paragons of respectable society, men above mixing with the vulgar in the dirty pool of politics, were none too good to win wealth through legislative enactment. Who knocked at the door of the legislature to beg for franchises that represented solid dollars? Who snapped up railroad charters? Who employed the "third house?" Every lobbyist was in the pay of men regarded as main props in the business world—men whose wives and daughters carried on society's show and the church's charities. How much of the money spent for grand mansions, fashionable clothes, elegant receptions came from state grants obtained through well-paid lobbyists from venal legislators? To learn the art of strictly legal, high-toned plundering, let one go to the legislature. Legislators might be honorable were not their most interesting business the giving of something to somebody, a public something temporarily in their charge going to the somebody offering them the biggest "divide."

The dollar, Hogan went on, was potent everywhere, purchasing acquiescence in unjust privileges after making those privileges property. A single incident would show this truth in several aspects. One day a sanctimonious man had called on him with a purpose.

He had, he said, heard of Hogan as great-hearted, and so on—the old formula of sweetening before swallowing. He begged that Hogan would assist him in destroying a demon that was impoverishing some of his parishioners, they being Hogan's constituents, too,—the demon drink. What could he do? asked Hogan. The good man denounced every rum shop as a breeder of insanity and a horrid nest of devils and snakes. The blazoned corner bar-rooms beguiled men away from their families to make beasts of them. Consider the effect of a single glass of strong drink. Before taking it a man might be sane and sober, but after it was down his blood was heated, his brain excited. Every time a bar-room door opened to let out a man with a drink in him it let a serpent crawl into the street. Ten thousand dens of reptiles sent out their venom day by day in this city to poison society. Think of the unfortunate man who took home a serpent, to coil itself about him and sting his family!

Here Hogan asked the wordy philanthropist what he could do for him; he was fully convinced of the evil of drink. The good brother replied that near where he lived was a liquor store kept by an ignorant foreigner; he would like to see it closed. It was an eyesore and a reproach to the neighborhood. That foreigner was growing rich from the earnings of the poor in the locality. Hogan, without a moment's hesitation, promised to have the saloon closed. He explained, however, that the foreigner was not the owner of the house in question. It was part of the Van B. estate. And perhaps Mr. Van B., one of the good

brother's flock, might lose money if the license were rescinded, since the rent of the corner must then be reduced. The fact was, said Hogan, the foreigner made but little money, as his rent increased year by year with his sales. The pious saver of souls received this information with an inscrutable countenance. He switched his talk to the weather, walked meekly down the street, and never afterward said aught to Hogan about closing that saloon.

Half-steps toward morals, continued Hogan, were easy. But how few will probe to bottom principles and then push on in the direction toward which the half-steps point. A certain religious man, for instance, had once told him where heaven was. A charitable person having given him a ten-dollar bill, he went down in the back streets, sought out a poor widow with a hungry little family, and gave her ten dollars' worth of food and clothing. Then he read an edifying tract to her—and, oh! there was heaven. Hogan counseled him to keep it up, without the tract. The tenement house in which the widow lived, and most of the tenements thereabout, were owned by the magnificent church in which the pious heaven-hunter preached. Forgive all these poor people a good part of their rent, advised Hogan, and thus turn the whole neighborhood into heaven. If a section of heaven could be had for only ten dollars, just think of what a broadcast permanent distribution of heaven would result were the poor given their barracks, if not rent free, at least at a rebate from rack-rent.

What, ordinarily, meant the outcry for justice, ex-

cept that the shouter himself was hurt? Take the so-called taxpayers. Their complaints are heard forever. But do they really want justice? The truth is, the taxpayers commonly shift their taxes upon the other classes. And to what extent are the attacks on the machine in politics honest? The most immaculate citizen as a candidate is not above coquetting with the basest heeler of his district. By what means did he, Hogan, grease the wheels of his machine the year round? Could he of himself supply the lubricating oil? No, nor could party assessments. Why did he subscribe to the "Friendly Hogan Association," the "Blue Hook Social Circle," the "Otonomowoc Rangers," the "White Plug Hat Sharp Shooters"? Simply so that on election day he might deliver to certain incorruptible candidates votes enough to put them in office. And any gentleman of his district who longed to mount the pedestal of public place could do so by advancing to Hogan so many thousand dollars cash and promising Hogan so many petty appointments. The voters themselves understood this thimble-rigging perfectly. That's why they formed their little neighborhood combinations, demanded their share of patronage and upheld Hogan as their benevolent boss. If there was a known honest man in his district, it was he, Hogan. There was no hypocrisy in him. He made no pretense to be what he was not, and because the boys had faith in him they swung the majority his way. Long ago had his voters recognized the one method by which their rights could be made tangible. Hence their demands for election-day pin money, for clerk-

ships and department jobs, and for chowder parties in summer and balls in winter—the politicians the disbursers every time. But such expenses, the boys knew, were charged up to the office-seekers and the blood-suckers on the public.

Hogan averred he liked to read homilies on machine politics. It was indeed amusing to analyze the remedies suggested. Equally so was it to see the good people of the community rise up and smash one machine—to erect another right in its place. He had on hand stores of raw material for newspaper articles, magazine treatises, sermons, and lectures on this subject, free of access to all. No amount of mere writing and preaching and resolving in virtuous indignation could end the reign of the boss. This potentate was the creature of conditions—of the legislature, the wealthy buyer of law, and the spoils-of-office practice. There was, of course, a remedy for it all—a remedy that might move on down deep to the moralities of property. When legislative bodies could no longer vote wealth into men's pockets, when the rich could no longer bribe law-givers, when office holders were servants, when the people carried their own common instincts of honesty and fair dealing into politics—then machine methods would end. In the meantime, he would contentedly hold the most honorable public position in the community—that of a political boss.

Somehow, ruminating on that sermon of Hogan's, I have been seeing in my mind's eye his funeral. It took place, as I have said, five years ago. Poor fellow! He went off quickly—with pneumonia; he caught cold

coming home from the Tim Regan reception one New Year's night. He stood a while on a corner with some of the boys fixing up Fourteenth district matters. Next day he was laid up, and before folks knew he was sick they saw his death notice in the newspapers.

Hogan's funeral was the largest that ever took place in our ward. The flowers sent by friends covered the hearse and filled two barouches. Every man prominent in local politics turned out in a carriage. A great throng walked. His praises were on every lip. All joined in saying he never had an enemy, unless it was himself. He was everybody's friend; he had a kind word for all. The boys of the ward, feeling blue, asked who could take his place. Hundreds of the poor were there to laud his virtues. He had got licenses for peddlers, permits for stand-keepers, bails for drunks, hospital tickets for the sick, characters for servants, jobs for laborers, abatement for nuisances for house owners—some boon for every class and condition. Many a good man had he rescued from the police courts! People would never know how much coal he had sent by the scuttleful to poor washerwomen. Who could tell how often his name had gone down on subscription papers for the dispossessed? Never had he refused anything in reason to any one. His free annual excursions were the finest that ever steamed up the East river. Only a few days before, when Widow McPherson's boy fell off the long dock, Hogan had paid a reward for the body and footed the funeral bill afterward. Faithfully and well had Hogan fulfilled his

mission as boss of the party and guardian of the ward.

Mortimer and I were never able to fill Hogan's vacant place in our partnership, and our battles in the district thenceforth were not always crowned with victory. Mortimer preferred club men to ward workers, and though a fine figure on state occasions he failed to muster Hogan's hosts on election days. Nor did I have a fondness for campaigning in bar-rooms or for hiring gangs of men to be at the polls by the day.

Well! well! Mortimer is gone, too. A politician's life is not slow. Mortimer's days were spent in dining and wining, in speech-making, in going about cultivating people;—smoking, eating, drinking, playing, talking. He never married. When he died, a victim to his duties, he was buried quietly in a fashionable cemetery.

Ah! Fine fellows, those partners of mine. They rose to the crest of the topmost wave in local politics. They saw all that public life can offer in a New York ward. I hardly know, had I to do it again, if I would advise them to take up the profession. Perhaps both might have done better by risking the chances at plain work.

As for myself, moderate man that I am, I have taken care of my health and my purse. This rheumatism now on me is hereditary, I am quite sure. I know it is not the result of electioneering. I hardly believe I shall try politics again, but if I do I will go in for honest reform—take my word for it.

My Election District.

Politically, New York City is typified in my election district. And of that district this is to be said: On election day certain of the rich are financially interested in results; the middle class count for little, one way or the other; and with few exceptions the numerous poor are voted by several sets of local political managers. The masses have no convictions.

New York has now, in its thirty assembly districts, considerably more than a thousand election districts. My election district, which is on the East Side, comprises two city blocks. It is an elongated parallelogram, its greater sides formed by two blocks, measuring from west to east, and its lesser sides by a short block, north and south.

I have been a district worker for the grand old party of moral ideas for many years. In studying my district I see various aspects of the social problem which it presents. These I try to reconcile with the genius of democracy—I am a patient tinker; I spent hours as a boy unraveling with my finger nails the snarls of a kite cord. Probably, my friend, if I set before you some of the circumstances that perplex me, you may be impelled to reform things. If you are, I promise you my moral support.

That end of my district which lies on the broad avenue nearest the middle line of the city is built of brownstone. Its houses, dwellings of four and five stories, are equal to the average in good uptown neighborhoods. But thence eastward, on the long sides of our parallelogram, the buildings grade downward—in style, if not in size. For about a third of the first block the houses are of brownstone or pressed brick. Then come several medium class flats. Next common red brick tenements. The eastern end is made up of low-grade tenements, stables, and factories. The district well illustrates how New York falls off in a few blocks from grandeur to squalor.

My district registers three hundred and fifty voters. It has besides perhaps fifty foreign male non-voters. In all we are about two thousand souls.

On election day the citizens of our district put themselves on an equality in a local barber shop. The polls are then opened there. At the polls, where every man counts one, dwells the spirit of democracy.

In the course of human affairs questions of public weal have arisen. As to how they shall be solved opinions differ. The voters, free, equal, and enlightened, have ranged themselves according to their views in political parties. Each side, through delegates to a convention, has formulated a platform—principles, sentiments, purposes. The parties, supporting their respective platforms and candidates, have reasoned with the masses. Each has selected as candidates men distinguished for capacity and character. The legislators chosen are to proceed to enact faithfully the

measures desired by the majority. For at the polls the best judgment of the people is recorded. Definite expression is given there to an awakened public conscience and a thoroughly informed public mind. This is theory.

Wherein practice diverges from this theory and why—problems, these, for students, such as you and I.

When considered with regard to wealth, my district is a top-heavy pyramid. The brownstone avenue side is the thin apex, where the wealth is, and the tenement houses the broad base, where the crowd is. One of the traditions of our republic, pleasing to every tenement-house boy, and fostered by good people in the trade of philanthropy, is that in this country the way is open for every citizen to rise from base to apex. Yet how all the virtue and talent of the tenements can gain quarters in the brownstone end is no more plain to me than how base can become apex. While I know that much work is done and self-denial practiced in the tenements I see but few removals from them to the brownstone end.

In those dwellings of my district which are occupied by several families wealth tapers off upward from floor to floor. In the boarding houses, of which we have not a few, the rooms nearest the roof are cheapest. Clothes, as well as houses, grade people; a garb stained by work places a man in tenement society.

In our brownstone end, the grounds for social distinction are: keeping a carriage or hiring one; following a profession or only a business; occupying a whole house or merely an apartment; living in a flat or in

a boarding house; being a white American or an olive Jew. But here caste entails no palpable discomfort.

It is in the tenement-house end that wide social gulfs separate the people. There, human beings who lack cohesiveness socially are closely packed physically. Irish will not fuse with English; nor French with German. Each house, however, commonly shelters families of but one nationality. As a fact, the district might be mapped off in sections showing little colonies of various peoples.

After wealth, caste and race, come other boundary lines. Every tenement has its own reputation: one is notoriously noisy, another quiet; one takes to beer, another to whisky; from some tenements people seldom move, from others once a month; in a few the inmates are exclusive, in the many they herd and swarm.

The tenement vote in my district is three times the brownstone vote.

Now, in these zig-zag streaks of truth you perceive some of the hard facts that stand in the way of our fine democratic theory.

Does the ballot box level men?

In one of the brownstone houses on the great avenue of my district lives a wealthy citizen—a well meaning man. He is possessed of convictions on many current public questions. He is sincere, capable, public spirited, well informed. But his views have no practical effect anywhere. He may discuss them in his club, occasionally outline them in a newspaper, or inject them in part into a campaign speech; but nothing follows. That gentleman counts for less

at the polls than the least of us men engaged in practical politics.

Around the corner, in an apartment house, lives an ambitious young man. Inspired by American traditions, he would strive for honorable standing among present-day statesmen. But he can reach the haven of lawmaker only in fancy unless he trims his sails to practical politics.

Bright young men in the tenement houses have their aspirations, too. But, early perceiving the single road open to preferment, they turn in numbers to practical politics.

Practical politics has its claws in every election district of the city. In my district it has at present four distinct sets of claws, one for each municipal party. The way to enter practical politics in New York is to allow the claws of your chosen party in your district to pick you up and draw you in. Then perchance you may influence party affairs a little. But, unless you make a business of politics, and train with the party wing that dominates, you will be a feather-weight in the scales.

Suppose you should come into my own city organization—that of the good old party of moral ideas. That organization has been the object of endless reforms. All that virtuous indignation and patchwork legislation can do for the system has been done for it. Its abuses have been repeatedly attacked, and for a while certain of them have been checked. But the system inevitably involves boss power, and neither in election district club nor assembly district branch

could you count for anything against the bosses. You might originate good measures, convince many members of the merits in your plans, and yet find the obstacles in your way countless.

What proportion of the voters in an assembly district are members of any party organization whatever? Of those who are members, how many are active? The facts in reply tell what hope the present form of organizing men by opinions offers for party purification and needed law. Of those hosts of citizens who fancy themselves intensely interested in the good of the nation, who find themselves in a fever of excitement during election times, who hotly dispute over candidates, carry torches in parades, hurrah themselves hoarse, and feel sore when their side is whipped at the polls, not one in ten helps to cut out the work of a campaign. Now, considerably more than a tenth of the New York voters are office-holders and their relatives, or office seekers and their relatives. This tenth sways practical politics.

Go into your assembly district club—say that of the fine old party of high-toned ideas—and among its members you will find so strong a combination with an eye to office that no proposition, however good in itself, will be received on its merits. What it will evoke will be nothing beyond an estimate of its effect on the office-getting or office-holding of the members.

Your assembly district organization sets up your local candidates for you. With the others of the city it declares what principles shall or shall not be em-

bodied in your municipal platform. It sends delegates to the state conventions of your party. At its primary elections it begins and finishes careers. Before it leading citizens bow down whose published utterances breathe the purest patriotism.

In the assembly district is a power that manipulates the party voters as checkers on a board. That power is the district boss. He pulls wires and electioneers all the year round. He is acquainted with the district workers of all the parties. He knows the marts of the purchasable vote, the headquarters of every social club, the numerical strength of each foreign element. Tell me, my reformer friend, what hope you can have, either in your election district or your assembly district, of carrying any measure not approved by your party boss. After great effort you might rally a dozen, even a score, of members at a meeting to vote for your reform. But on two hours' notice the boss can fill the hall with heelers and nip your scheme in the bud.

The assembly district bosses of the various parties play a game against one another all the year round. Their lieutenants are the election district leaders. I am leader of my election district. I'll tell you the simple secrets of my trade.

Soon after an election, I take from the city's registry list the names of the voters in our district, and begin preparations for next year's campaign. I put a certain mark against the names of the brownstone voters, with another to indicate their political stripe. The brownstone vote is usually unchangeable. I

next attach another distinctive mark to the names of office-holders and their relatives. The way relatives vote an office-holder's ticket is creditable to human brotherhood. Then I have a mark for the true-blue party men in brick fronts; another for each nationality; another for men never known to sell their votes; another for men who always sell theirs; another for the men who may be out of work at election time. Watching thenceforth the waves of public sentiment and the actions of my opponents, I can report to headquarters a month before the next election the proportion of decided, undecided, and persuadable voters in my district. On the basis of such reports from all the districts, our party leaders seek to provide the sinews of war.

In looking over my little book, I find that the proportion of men in my district amenable to inducements is large. Among them are the riff-raff, the gangs that hang about the liquor stores or sleep in boarding stables, the denizens of open-door tenements who on Saturday nights put into beer the money that ought to go into food or furniture. For good men out of work a long time I use an interrogation mark. Such men will sometimes take a few dollars, if they intend voting your way. It helps them along.

The young workingmen of my district have become voters since the era of unselfish patriotism closed. They have no strong party ties. I classify them among the voters possibly open to inducements. They say it makes no difference to them which side wins—no effects of reform ever reach down to them. They

seem to understand better than their fathers that politics is business. They hug no delusions as to being sovereigns in a free country. Seeing several sets of bosses bidding for votes, they think it the sensible thing to turn their votes to commercial account. Some of the enterprising among them get up social clubs, using the membership to strike for spoils.

Three drinking houses flourish in my district. I patronize all, but my election business I transact at Kimberly's. Kimberly set up his place twenty years ago. He keeps good stuff and hires wide-awake bartenders. His custom is respectable. He is now an important man in our ward. He owns four or five big tenements around his store. He is a staunch moral reformer, but if the unwashed, or the third—or the fourth—party workers do business in his place Kimberly gives them unfeigned welcome and loyal service. During last campaign three sets of party claws in velvety pads were worked day and night in his saloon. Kimberly may be our next Anti-Machine ward boss.

Suppose now, my well-to-do friend, your taste is for public life; suppose you had tried reform and felt the power of the boss, what course would be open to you? You would either put your ambition to sleep or stand an assessment and get your nomination. You would act sensibly, wouldn't you? Then the boss would have you written up in the press, your name cheered lustily at the primaries, and your vote the best he could poll at the election. You would help pay the legitimate expenses of the campaign—

meetings, bands, banners, processions—and these cost something. To further help toward success, you would financially assist the election district leaders. My little book would show you how to aid me and why. I would transact business for you at Kimberly's.

Look over the facts as I give them and tell me whether you see any way out of the clutches of the boss.

The theory of our institutions is perfectly correct. I long to see practical politics lifted to the virtuous level of that theory.



A Conservative Cashier.

It took me just ten years to rise to be cashier in the Chestnut Square bank. Entering as junior clerk, I made the up grades easily. I took care to qualify myself for promotion, but I had also an uncle on the board of directors. So when I came to be cashier it was only what all had learned to expect.

As cashier, I guided the bank in well-worn grooves. Our directors were cautious men. I myself was averse to speculation; I rested content in making a living that was comfortable and sure, and found little temptation in the ways of Wall street. I closely guarded our interests, kept an eye on the employés, and above all else avoided risk. Our bank was not an ambitious one. We were not among the leaders at the Clearing-House, but we stood well, midway.

This state of affairs I accepted as settled. As to my own future, I looked to retiring some far-off day, moderately well-to-do, with reputation sound, my successor a rising man in middle life, the bank ever pursuing the even tenor of its way. Never did I dream, that I, of all the bank attachés, should one day be confronted with ruin and a blasted name. Yet that's just what took place. By only a hair's breadth did I escape a dishonorable course, exposure, and that piti-

less fire of criticism from the daily press which now and again is directed at some unfortunate bank official. In this ordeal I developed traits of which I had never before been in the least conscious.

My trouble came in a series of events which led me from a situation perfectly safe to one extremely precarious, and yet I find it difficult to-day to settle on the exact point at which my judgment was first at fault.

When I had been six years cashier, I had my home in the suburbs, and little else. But of course I was open to making money. So, on inducements, I took stock in a company that had erected a large hotel in the Catskill Mountains, mortgaging my house to do so. But the venture became the sport of adverse fortune. A railroad coming along left our hotel far aside, brought into use better sites than ours, and gave luckier men the hotel trade of the region. A white elephant was on our hands eating up money.

Bills had to be paid. Bills for constructing the hotel; for improving it; for carrying it on. So heavy were the drafts on me that before long I was driven to borrowing. But how could I borrow considerable sums? A bank cashier can no more get money without collateral than any one else. In fact, with lenders ever suspicious, a cashier must not offer any but the best of paper. On thinking the matter over, I decided to seek aid from my uncle, who had securities with us on deposit. But when I called at his house I was told he was ill and could not be seen. This brought me to survey my predicament soberly. Go-

ing about among business friends to raise money would be useless. But before letting my home go, or the hotel company pass into bankruptcy, I must exhaust every resource. To my uncle alone could I look for help. He had come on me suddenly once when pushed for cash and with scant ceremony availed himself of all I could spare. Those securities of his were in the bank safe. Why should I not now borrow some of them and fix matters up with him on his recovery? It was easily enough done; I had only to take the papers. Well, I did it, and I raised cash on them.

Two inconvenient things now happened. The hotel company unexpectedly drew on me for still more money; my uncle grew better and wrote for his papers in a hurry.

Among other bonds in our safe were some belonging to an old customer that probably would not be called for in years. After a deal of perplexity over my uncle's demand, I decided to get back in hand his securities, take out some belonging to this old customer, and rely on borrowing above-board from my uncle later. This exchange of documents I made.

The tide continued against me. When I saw my uncle he was crabbed and close fisted, complaining of hard times. He would lend me nothing. I could not tell him what I had done at the bank. A bare hint of that makeshift would have set me in the street.

I was now in deep water. In going into the hotel venture I felt that I was but trying to build up my fortunes in a creditable way; in borrowing from my

uncle I was conscious of nothing irregular except anticipating his consent; but now I felt I was engaged in a struggle that involved not only my children's bread but my own good name.

While oppressed with such thoughts, I noticed one day that Westwood, our paying teller, was carrying himself toward me with a formality wholly new. I recognized the fact with a pang. What! Was I—like the unfortunate financiers shown up in the press and testified against in the courts—was I suspected and watched, and that by a fellow official? Westwood was the only one who could lay hands on the evidence against me. He and I carried the only keys to the bank safe. Once in a fortnight we two looked over the securities deposited with us. When last performing this task I had called off to him those of my uncle that I had hypothecated, and Westwood had checked them off on his list. Was it possible he had noticed that I had named them without handling them, or had he since overhauled the safe in my absence and detected my abstraction of the other bonds, those of the old customer?

Whatever the facts, Westwood left the bank that evening soon after it was closed to the public, bidding me good night icily. He was a thin-blooded man, with a small mind steeped in figures and a soul hungry for advancement and money. He walked out primly, his air significantly business-like. The clerks stopped writing to look after him, and before resuming work glanced at me.

I found that my pen trembled; I could write noth-

ing; the figures eluded me. I was in a fever and beset with fears that would not down. Seeing my face in a glass, I was unnerved by my haggard looks. To quit for the day would be relief. After a word with one or two clerks about their work, I left the banking room, off to catch a train home.

It happened that when in the hallway, just a step outside the room, I stopped to feel in my pockets for a handkerchief. The big double doors had slammed behind me, and the clerks were already gossiping loudly as if I were far away.

"Who's to be the new cashier when he goes?" inquired a junior.

"Why, Westwood, of course," said Price, the chief clerk.

"How long has he been at it?" asked Snow.

"The Lord only knows. Westwood's had him under suspicion a long time, but never caught him before. Building big hotels on five thousand a year!"

An overpowering inward force drew me back quickly into that room. I walked in at a brisk pace, passed behind the half partition at my desk, and tossed on it my gripsack and umbrella. I had recovered my nerve. Already I had plans. First I must gain time. I said loudly to the chief clerk:

"Price, when you get through this evening, come out to my house and dine with me."

Price promptly accepted the invitation. The others looked relieved; they had feared I was about to storm at them. I opened the safe, took out a packet of papers, and put it in my gripsack. I continued:

"I'll want you to check off some of these securities to-night. I am going to examine them carefully at home, and ascertain their present values."

I walked out with my best business air. Price now had no fears that I would run away that evening with what I had taken from the safe. Westwood, if he should return to search the safe, would be unable to determine which of the papers I had abstracted previously and which I had taken now. Both thus balked I was safe until next day.

Price came out. Some young people dropping in after dinner he spent an hour chatting with them. When he came to my study I had rows of figures to show for my evening's work. No longer expecting to trip me up, he helped me mechanically, and when I proposed that we finish in the morning at the bank he was thankful. He took a late train to the city, declining to stay for the night.

I was left to my reflections. What was the morning to bring? To Westwood, victory? to me, exposure, dismissal, perhaps arrest? to the newspapers a sensation? Was it I to whom this disaster was to come? I who, at heart, was honest through and through; who had handled millions for other men without the loss of a penny. It was preposterous! I meditated long. I would see. Yes; I would see!

Before daylight I was up and at the railway station to catch the first train to town. The road was a branch line, which ran but few trains. A card was up announcing that because of a washout none of its trains could reach the city before noon. This fact

I at once telegraphed to Westwood at the bank. But I turned the delay to my profit. I hired a team and drove at top speed eight miles to a station on the main line, catching a train and making the city at 9 o'clock.

I shall not dwell here on what I did between 9 o'clock and noon. I need not explain how it was possible to do as I did; all who know Wall street know it can be done. Neither am I going to describe the excitement I labored under that morning. The story I am telling is not one of the Street; it is of the bank and human nature that crops out of men united only by commercial ties.

I went direct to Wall street. There I quickly raised twenty thousand dollars on some of the bonds I carried with me. The market was lively, feverish—it was the fateful morning when Southwest common fell nearly half in price, going down for awhile a point a minute, making veteran stockdealers stand aghast. Employing several brokers I “plunged” for two hours, selling short. Then when others were selling madly, I bought my short stock and quit. I had eighty thousand dollars to my account. I went and withdrew from hypothecation all the paper I had pledged, including the bonds of the old customer which had first got me in trouble. Ascertaining by telephone that the first train in on my branch road had arrived, I made my way to the Chestnut Square bank.

Business there was going on as usual. In the directors' room, however, I found some of the board assembled, looking magisterial. It flashed on me what they, and Westwood, and the clerks now ex-

pected: Charges against me; Westwood's testimony regarding the abstracted securities; my humiliating confession; my piteous appeal to spare me for my family's sake; finally my arrest. But I knew better. A spirit of triumph rose within me. Bah! Money talks!

I bade the directors good morning heartily.

"I suppose Mr. Westwood got my dispatch," was my remark. "I was belated."

"Yes," dryly responded one of the directors, the others puzzled at my straightforward manner.

Taking out all the papers, I tossed my gripsack aside.

"I've been doing some work at nights," I explained, "looking into the terms of issue and the market value of these bonds."

Then I called out: "Price!" and when Price came in from the banking room: "I have finished the rest of these papers you and I had last night. Now you and Snow verify them all—every one. I suppose Mr. Westwood has gone over those in the safe this morning, as this is our examining day."

Turning to the directors: "Anything pressing to-day, gentlemen?"

"Oh, no!" The reply was in weak chorus. They had just happened in.

They now talked to me and to one another, of nothings, in a desultory way. The presageful looks they wore when I entered were gone; they seemed embarrassed and uneasy. Perhaps they feared that some

awkward turn in events might make me doubt their entire trust in me.

I carelessly took up a newspaper and glanced it over, page after page. The directors, entertaining one another, forced themselves to repeat flat talk about the weather.

By and by Westwood entered. How different the tableau from the one he had foreseen! He did *not* see me ruined in fortune and broken in spirit. He did *not* set out to arraign me with hypocrisy's words: "Gentlemen, I regret sincerely to make grave charges against our cashier," et cetera. No; he came in crawling, like a criminal condemned. He mumbled:

"All the securities are now in the safe."

Without looking up from my newspaper, I called out: "All there in good shape, Mr. Westwood?"

"Yes,"—a hoarse whisper.

"And all *At* paper?"

"Yes." He looked helplessly toward the directors, as if stultifying himself in their presence.

"Old Chestnut Square bank as sound as a new dollar?"

"Yes,"—a sigh.

"And all in its employ faithful to the bank and to one another?"

"Yes,"—a moan.

I buried myself in my paper. Nothing worried *me*; nothing was going on that especially concerned me.

The directors slipped off, one by one. Westwood had crept back to his desk.

The rest of that day whenever near Westwood or the disloyal clerks I looked squarely into their faces. They hung over their work sheepishly, with make-believe expressionless countenances. Westwood broke down before the end of the afternoon and went home.

By night I had my world rearranged. I regarded the future with equanimity. No cashier more honorable than I was in the banking business. Henceforth I would run the Chestnut Square bank in the safe old grooves. None but friends of mine would be among its employés, either.

A week later, Westwood resigned. The day he left us I looked at him hard, often. He flushed and hung his head. As I eyed him, I remembered many things—how he had rummaged my safe while I was away, how he had been baffled when I took home the second lot of papers, how he had hastily summoned the directors next morning, and how crest-fallen he was when I forced him to report everything sound and me honest, exposing himself as an over-zealous fool. And I could imagine the directors afterward privately summoning him before them, rebuking him for his jealousy and officiousness, and indignantly ordering him to hand in his resignation. He richly deserved his punishment!

As for Price, Snow, and that gossiping junior clerk, I dropped them from the bank within a year. I run that bank myself now, and conservatively, too.

A Successful Man.

Simon Clinch died last week. He had reached sixty. For thirty years and more he had been spoken of in our town as a successful man. Somehow, when men of our acquaintance die we find ourselves reviewing their lives, summing up their value to mankind, and estimating their influence on the people who have known them. Since the close of the last chapter in Simon Clinch's career, I have been thinking of his success and its chief results. In talking with John Norman I find that he has been doing likewise.

John has been relating to me the first incident that fixed Simon in his mind as an object lesson. One evening when he was a boy of ten, while passing Simon's new house with his mother, that best of women took occasion to preach a little sermon. Mr. Clinch, she said, had earned every cent it cost to build that house. Starting in life a poor boy, he had become a successful man. A few steps further they met Simon himself, and John's mother, being neighborly, repeated to Mr. Clinch what she had just said to her little son. Mr. Clinch sympathized with the subject of her sermon. With becoming modesty he talked of his house. He told freely of its cost. Surveying it with satisfaction he showed where in building he had

saved a dollar here and two dollars there. The lot he had owned a long time. He had once thought of building up town among the fine folks, but he decided not to incur the heavy expense for a piece of ground in that quarter. His house was only a two-story brick, to be sure, but it reached far back on the lot.

Mr. Clinch evidently admired his own shrewdness and economy. On leaving him, John's mother repeated to John that Mr. Clinch had risen in fortune through his own unaided efforts. And it occurred to little Johnny that his mamma had pressed Mr. Clinch and his new house into service to give the right bent to her son's budding mind.

Some years later, John Norman and I, then lads nearly full grown, spent a half day of travel in a stage coach with Mr. Simon Clinch. Simon liked to talk, his choice of topics himself. He told us about his rise to success. As a boy he had been bound out to a small farmer. At twenty-one he wasn't worth a dollar and was barely able to read and write. He married as soon as he was "free." His master had followed shoemaking at home in winter, and when Simon brought his young wife to town he began for himself as cobbler. He rented a two-room shanty in the outskirts at three dollars a month. He must have got all the work he could do, for he told us that he toiled at the bench fourteen, fifteen, and many a day sixteen hours in the twenty-four. He also worked the small garden behind his shanty. Besides the vegetables he raised, the only food he and his wife ate the first year was dried herring and various dishes

of cornmeal. No carpet was on their floors. Their evening light was a grease taper. Simon worked at his bench barefoot, except in cold weather, when he wore cast-off shoes patched up and dubbed. The one table was a dry-goods box; the chairs Simon made himself. Simon's wife wore calico, and he scare-crow rags at his bench and a whole suit only on Sunday. The wife knit stockings and mittens and sewed undergarments for both home and the neighbors. Simon kept two pigs, feeding them cabbage leaves, turnip tops, kitchen garbage from the neighbors', and a very little corn. The pigs when fattened were sold. In those days Simon looked on fresh pork as a luxury.

By the end of his first year in town, Simon had put away a little more than three hundred dollars. He waited on his landlord one day to speak of the bad condition of his shanty. It had, if possible, run down during the year. The roof leaked. The weather-boarding had not been painted in years. Some broken window panes Simon had replaced with sheets of dirty yellow paper. The fences were tumbling down. The garden was unsightly. But Simon did not tell his landlord the pigs had the run of it after he had gathered his vegetables. When Simon told this part of his story his little gray eyes twinkled.

Simon's landlord, a wealthy man, wanted no bother with the shanty. He told the cobbler he would make no repairs, but would sell it as soon as a purchaser turned up. Simon declared he must move—the house was no longer fit to live in. So the landlord put up

the property for sale. A lawyer bought it—for Simon—at two hundred and fifty dollars. It had cost his landlord four hundred.

The next summer Simon worked every foot of his garden, raised four pigs—in a pen, this time—repaired and whitewashed the fences, painted the house outside and in, mended windows, and set out trees, for fruit in the yard and shade at the curb. The little loft above the ground floor he made a two-room attic. When the last nail was driven and the last touch of paint completed, Simon's unsightly shanty had become a neat cottage.

About this time Simon put in another shoemaker's bench, facing his own, and took on a lad to learn the trade. Not in the slightest did he change his mode of living, except that he bought a barrel of flour and sometimes dined on fresh meat. The close of his second year in town saw him owner of his home and possessor of five hundred dollars in bank. He looked on himself as worth a cool thousand. That, he told John Norman and me, was the hardest earned thousand dollars he ever got hold of. After that both he and the thousand worked for more. Money makes money. In truth, money often earns more than men. Before he saved his thousand dollars, Simon said reflectively, he at times feared hunger. After he got it, what he ached for was more money. A man is somebody when he has money.

From this point on Simon's personal reminiscences were somewhat rambling, as he sat talking with John and me in the stage coach. We gathered, however,

that Simon was at about the thousand dollar period when he discovered that the world is ever chanting the deeds of the men who do something, and money-making is the one thing that all can understand and that many do most admire. Sweet gossip-singers were soon charming Simon with the music of flattery. The eyes of this chorus upon him, he redoubled his efforts toward financial achievement, lusty voices ready to laud each new proof of his prowess. While his first year had seen him humbly earning dimes, his third saw him basking in his new-born neighborhood fame. A rich elder in the community had already told him he was a rising young man, sure to make his mark. People who when he came to town had classed him as a clodhopper, now conceded him a place as a substantial man of the borough. When he began, the spur of want had driven into him its sharp-pointed rowels; now it was the spur of ambition that touched and thrilled him. Praise made his blood tingle and set him dreaming day and night of fortune to come and of power over men.

Power over men! Whatever discordant notes were sent up over his successes he set down to envy—and he could bide his time and get the best of the envious! Oh! the satisfaction he felt in taking trade from that shoemaker down street who owned the showy store with the brightly lit-up window!

With this much of Simon's life from his own lips, much of it coming out indirectly in his reflections, John Norman and I have linked the rest together.

Clinch's experience with his shanty taught him a

way to make money fast. He observed that investments in the best streets rarely yielded the return obtained from the tenements of the poor. Right around him, then, in the meaner quarter, was his chance. With his five hundred dollars he bought a piece of run-down property near his own dwelling, repaired it, improved it, and doubled its rental. The next year saw him owner of a third small house. Soon he showed himself a landlord not to be trifled with. If a tenant failed to pay up on rent day, the law was brought to bear on him. Occupants of his property had to make their own repairs. No tenant would dream of letting a house of Simon Clinch's run-down in order to trick him into a sale.

Men with capital now began to employ Simon's talents. They were on hand to extend him a well-secured loan in case he wished to buy a house. So Simon went on, buying much and mortgaging safely. At the end of ten years he was nominal owner of nearly forty dwellings, every one occupied by laboring people—the class that pays highest for all it consumes, quality considered.

It was about this time that Simon built his two-story brick house in the midst of his tenements. When he moved into it paeans from the chorus of his narrow world swelled loud in his ears. "Success! Success! Success!" He never tired of the monotony of the strain. And since men were bent so greatly on praising him, he would point out just wherein he ought to be admired; and many a pleasant hour did he pass rehearsing the particulars of his wonderful works.

Thenceforth for years Simon developed his affairs cautiously, entering into no enterprise with which he was unfamiliar. He left the bench for good when he moved into his new house; but he put a workman there in his place. In time he set up a tanyard—he knew leather—and some of his tenants found in it a chance to work out their rent. Next he bought a farm near town and put up a barn on the alleyway in the rear of his home lot, thus providing work for more tenants. He still felt young when he found himself possessed of lands, houses, horses, cattle, and the command of men.

Simon had two sons and a daughter. They grew up the most important young persons of their not very choice neighborhood. They learned early to give orders and expect deference. They wore better clothes than the neighbor children, and so well was their father's table supplied that little parasite playfellows loved their company at meal time.

A poor child playing about Simon Clinch's house with his youngsters would have beheld in it some marvelously fine things. On the parlor wall hung a drawing of the tanyard in a three-foot-square real gilt frame. To the left of the tanyard was Mrs. Clinch's photograph, to the right Mr. Clinch's, the frames large ovals of black walnut. Near the front window stood the only piano in that part of the town. Set in mathematical order against the walls was a full set of straight-back black haircloth furniture—seven pieces. All the rooms in the house were fully furnished. Even the dining room had carpet on the

floor. And the piles of cord-wood in the shed and the twelve squeaking porkers in the great pen in the garden told the poor neighbor child most impressively that in Simon Clinch's pocket there was money without end.

Simon's wife died at forty. After she was gone tongues in the neighborhood wagged about her hard work and underfeeding when her children were young.

Simon Clinch brought up his girl as well as the boys to work and to think of gain. With a keen eye to chances, he one day sent the three to the railway station with baskets of nicely baked pies. The regular hucksters sold poor stuff. The venture paying, one of the boys and the girl went to the station at train time for several years. Simon put all they made to their bank account; he was teaching them the value of a dollar and leading them toward success in the trail he had blazed. He saw that his children learned to read and write, but knew no reason why they should bother about fine learning.

When Simon's children were nearly grown, had dropped pie-selling, and had taken to wearing their Sunday clothes every day, Clinch made a move in a wholly new direction. He took a year's lease of old Colonel Gresham's house, a fine residence which stood in the best street in the town, and moved into it with his family. This step took the townsfolk by surprise, especially the people of means and refinement amid whom the Clinches took up their abode. Nobody, however, was at all surprised when at the end of the year Simon and his family went back to the

two-story brick. Neither he nor his children in their habitually copious flow of reminiscence ever touched upon their experience during that year in the midst of, but hardly in company with, the "big bugs" of the town.

Simon's business routine for the rest of his days may be summed up briefly. Collecting rents, overseeing his houses, managing the farm, shaving notes—these tasks kept him moderately busy. He met with setbacks. A new steam tannery in town drove him out of that business. A depreciation in his railroad stocks nipped from his fortune the savings of ten years. Neat new tenements put up by men satisfied with average returns drew away his best tenants and reduced his rentals. His sixtieth year saw him worth no more than his fortieth. As his fellow-townsmen became convinced that his fortunes had long since reached their zenith, and as greater stars rose in the local financial firmament, the plaudits Simon had smilingly received while making his first thousands became gradually fainter. Indeed, the chorus in time changed its note;—for Simon never lent a dollar without interest, never gave in charity, never entertained, never showed a spark of public spirit, and in no wise helped one soul outside his family.

Simon's elder son grew up lazy. He was satisfied just to live on from day to day, taking life easy about the barn and the kitchen fire, like a tramp. His first-born thus dull and indolent, Simon centered his hopes on his second son. But this one turned out a con-

firmed, though good-natured, tippler. The girl, after glimpses of city life on the trains at the station, clandestinely married a commercial traveler and went off to live in New York. Her husband turned out to be a kindly chap, whose extremely small commissions tended to grow less.

Simon once went into politics—just once—and the overwhelming majority against him in his own ward he attributed to the jealousy of unsuccessful men and the revenge of tenants he had dispossessed. He might have been appointed to the school board, that refuge of middle-age mediocrity, but he stood in awe of the book learning of the teachers. He was never comfortable when mingling with the business men of the town; they had words and manners that he failed to get the hang of. But social refuge and spiritual consolation he did find in the church. He bought a cushioned pew near the pulpit and enjoyed the benevolent consideration of his pastor.

Simon believed that his way of rising in life was not only the best way for the poor man, but the only one: First save a thousand dollars; then let it and you both earn more. When John Norman went to Germany to study medicine on a few hundred dollars, Simon croaked mournfully; and when John came back in debt Simon resented it as if John had affronted him. And when John settled down to a precarious practice in the city, instead of laboring on his father's scrub oak farm, Simon flatly called him a fool. Once, when John and I, perhaps a trifle too much tricked out, met Simon in overalls and an old brown shirt, he bluntly

told us we should yet come to want, as we deserved.

Well, Simon died last week. He met a violent end. A tenant had moved from one of his old houses, saying it might fall down. Simon went through it, testing the floors with an iron bar. He must have pressed too hard at a weak point, for the flooring gave way and the house caved in and buried him alive.

I was at his funeral. It was not largely attended. The obsequies were but a cold ceremony. The pastor spoke briefly, referring to Simon as 'a successful man. The eldest son displayed no feeling. The other was not to be seen; some one said he was indisposed. The daughter and her husband were there in neat mourning, their two little city girls at their side. By the will the daughter takes most of the fortune, to spend in New York.

The town paper has published a brief obituary notice of Simon Clinch, the writer avoiding with delicacy all biographical snags. The notice, after outlining Simon's life, ends by saying that he was a successful man.

And John Norman and I (echoing general private opinion) have asked each other: Wherein?

The Coming Newspaper.

[As Imagined By a Philosophic "Exchange Editor."]

"Some one knocking? Come in! Ah, good day! Am I still at it? Yes, my friend; at it right along. It never stops. Every morning a pile of newspapers before me; every evening my desk nearly clear again. Catch up? No; never yet. Some papers I get through with in a moment. Just like people you meet; a glance at them is enough. But harvest from others as I may, I know there could be a good aftermath.

"Have I views on newspaperdom? Yes, truly. Consent to give them? Well, you're of the craft, and to you I might impart a few trade secrets in confidence. Just at this moment I'm tired reading; the lines are waltzing on the pages. Sit there, so. Let your cigar smoke blow that way. The den's not roomy. You've fixed on a special topic, eh?—'The evolution—of—the—coming—newspaper.' A pregnant subject that, my friend.

"Well, taking it slowly, we'll begin with myself. You believe you see me here, a work-worn old chap, in a little room, top floor of a big printing house, reading a newspaper. And you think that day in and day out I pore over newspapers. An illusion, that.

The newspaper before my eyes I never see. I look toward it, but only at its facts beyond, as through a window. I'm a mind, peering through one window and another, away out upon city and country—at times even to the other side of the world—contemplating men and events. Some of my windows are cracked, some blurred, some quite opaque; but some are clear as crystal, and what's more—Eh? Oh, what you see you believe, and you see me reading newspapers, and you're here to have me talk, not about watch-tower windows, but newspapers. Well, so let it be.

"To say nothing of our foreign list, I have sight acquaintance with five hundred American papers. As to evolution in newspaperdom, certain tendencies have of late become more and more striking. Looking ahead in the direction they indicate,—and half believing in the forecast my fancy suggests,—I have at times imagined what eventually the newspaper may be.

"But first, something as to what the newspaper is—besides all the overmuch it says it is.

"Of American daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly publications, the directories of the trade this year give a list of fifteen thousand. But in the long list are few kinds. We can classify the prodigious lot:

"Perhaps one hundred of the dailies are newspapers of the best type. Of this hundred, each has individuality. Each yields profit to readers as well as to stockholders, and with qualifications they may be regarded as in that exalted position called independent.

"After this front rank come the swell mob of minor dailies. In their contents, taste and originality now and then crop up, but many have no special mission for good and make no attempt to rise above the conditions of their not noble birth. They come to life through the demands of population-centers for advertising media, or through the needs of political rings for organs, or the craving of the thoughtless crowd for sensational rot—sporting news, police court gossip, delicious sensual dirt, theatrical details of attractive crime. Some are hired draught-animals for aspiring politicians, or they are trained fleas, biting at a master's bidding.

"The vulgar sort of dailies strain themselves under a perverted sense of duty. Guided by its false light, their reporters pretend to omnipresence, their editors to omniscience. If dust blows from an ash-cart, space-scribblers write it up paragraphically and call their trash 'stories.' If in far-away lands potentates meet in secret conclave, feather-head editor-philosophers unhesitatingly prophesy the consequent moves in statecraft. Aye, real duty such penmen abandon for false notions of duty. Here, look at this paper, the 'Morning Constellation.' It panders systematically to any power that may help it or hurt it. Its utterances on subjects that readers should hold important are never without obvious bias. How depressingly tame the iteration of its political creed, delivered in pithless paragraphs, with make-believe rabidness. The 'Constellation' manifestly is controlled by party censors; its huckstered opinions are

of no value to any one save its cashier; it is flavored with stale spice; its professions are twice laid. See how chockful its columns are of inconsequential happenings, arrayed under a waste of deceptive headings. And how ponderous its editorial twaddle;—serene absurdity padded and ludicrous misinformation insisted upon. From the so-called news of that sheet the reader can hardly sift a single fact of value—perhaps the reader of such a paper doesn't want to;—from its flood of chatter not a grain of sense. This rank weed in journalism will one day be uprooted by the coming newspaper—of which, by the way, I set out to speak. But, your pardon; let me move along to my idea gradually. A glance at things done and doing before we get at what's going to be done.

“The country weekly press forms the bulk of American newspaperdom. And let me tell you the trash weekly is steered by a poorer quality of brain than the dependent daily. In small towns it is a cheap advertising throw-around and retailer of the small beer brewed by corner grocery gossips. At the ‘county capital’ it lives under temptation to become a veritable sucker on a mean local political machine. Here, look at this ‘Village Peavine Advocate,’ is it not petty, dull, and in looks contemptible? And here, its political enemy and rival solicitor for patronage, the ‘Buncombe County Inkwaster,’ larger but no more wholesome, prides itself on its conservatism; that is, on drawing in its horns when hard blows are going. These two sheets are of the prostitute class. Safe in smooth party grooves, their sluggish editors open

up no serious issue whatever. They court no field of discussion save the political. In that they are at home. All the year round they do party work—delighted to throw themselves into the unclean pool of personal politics and ‘add to its offensiveness.’ As antagonists they understand themselves. They hotly go through the motions of fighting, daub and daub back with the old grime, reweave their outworn half-arguments, and rethrash their grainless political straw, no one taking the whole paltry business less in earnest than themselves. These petty editors are the smart imps of their contracted worlds. Mere clowns, they hire out to the local political circus managers, and prance around the ring, boisterously shouting gags, indifferent alike to applause and hisses, if they can only put in their pockets checks and see in the future post-offices. The circulation of these papers, you may safely reckon, will vanish before that of the higher type of newspaper which is to come. Only good country papers will live.

“In nothing that I have said have I meant to undervalue the office of editor. On newspapers of every kind are conscientious editors. But in the environment of to-day writers are put near defiling pitch. Consider conditions. Begin with the little fellow who in a hamlet edits a local outside half-sheet on the back of a ready-print inside. Is he to stand up for independence and perfect freedom of expression, to have perhaps half his neighbors turning their backs on him, the other half already opposed to him politically and regarding him as conspicuously dishonest

and untruthful? No; he's not anxious for real fight every day. Sore wounds enough do his sham battles bring him. Move on up along the financial scale, and where is the last clog of the dependent newspaper writer to be thrown off? Here and there is an idealist, a perfectly fair judge of humanity as he sees it, a diligent chronicler of well-digested news—but none too remunerative is his paper, nor is his bed one of roses. Up a little further, where editor is divorced from proprietor. There the writer is advocate retained by fee, his brains under orders. Often the newspaper owner is a business man, nothing more—his editor a movable, mayhap a chattel.

“A moment here. Let the hired penman's defense be heard. The employé's duty is to obey his employer, is it not? The employed writer is impersonal. No public teacher he, no guardian of morals; merely part of a machine to grind out dividends for stockholders. His head is a convenient phrase box, from which a column is dumped into the paper daily. In general the writer expresses happily what he believes thoroughly; overworked, he at times fills his column with insipid stuff, writ mechanically; on occasions he may, indeed, write what is not bottom truth.

“News is goods. Opinions are goods. Haunting facts these; and neither the printer who works off a tattling sheet at the cross-roads nor the financier who runs a metropolitan daily can ignore them. The newspaper proprietor is a newsmonger, an opinion huckster. What is wanted by his run of customers? Homely truth is unpopular. A pattern of article that

men and women take to nowadays is a broad stripe of fiction woven with a mere thread of fact. Put your material together skillfully, and, flimsy as it is, its color, its smoothness, its catchiness, draw. It is but for a day. Few buyers concern themselves as to its quality. So, Mr. Publisher deals in unsubstantial goods, superficially pleasing. To supply public demand is the business of his factory hands—his editors, reporters, printers. And to them what is the desideratum—the quality of their work or scale rates of pay? Yet, fact it is that in serious article making the journalist adheres to the truth just as he sees it nineteen times in twenty. And if under pressure of office policy deviation from the exact truth becomes necessary, the skillful perverter of fact need not pen the lie direct. Timely suppression or evasion may permit of a desired inference not entirely supported by truth put explicitly. Even this done, is the writer to blame? The breakdown from ideal veracity is usually brought on by self-interest in the counting room. There's a point for the newspaper reader. The interests of a paper are not always those of its patrons—even when patrons reads advertisers. Nowadays a needed public reform may clash with the interests of the powerful backers of a newspaper. Let writers do their best, can they mend this flaw in journalism? No. Then let the sin of it rest where it ought.

“A hundred of the large daily newspapers in America independent? On reflection, the estimate seems liberal. The independent dailies can't be bribed or coerced; only the weaknesses common to

humanity swerve them the hair which betrays them as less than divine. Let us pronounce them among the admirable productions of a glorious country. Indeed, it is while contéplating them that one foresees the coming newspaper.

"Forerunners of the mighty newspaper our children will read have already been seen. Issued tentatively, they have been received by the public in wonder, as snowflakes are in September. They were octuple, nonuple, decuple, my Latin gives out!—they were sixty, eighty page sheets, packed with every good thing publishable.

"Elements of the coming newspaper are: A cosmopolitan body of readers; a liberal capitalist; the developed local news agency: the coöperative telegraph news shorn of monopoly; accomplished specialists, each writing what he thinks and speaking from his soul—editor, reporter, or correspondent; the letter-casting machine; the improved process picture-maker; the web perfecting press; systematic distribution of the product by carriers. These elements already exist, some highly developed. Whoever shall unite all will be deserving of a triumph greater than any of Caesar's.

"Glance at these desiderata.

"In the only half-ripe world of to-day are a growing class of readers who want truth when obtainable. When not, they will rest content with approximation to truth, awaiting better results in a clearer light. These readers will flock to the support of the earliest precursor of the perfect newspaper.

"The masterful capitalist whose gold is to unite the wheels and shafts and pipes of a magic newspaper workshop will surely appear. Falling meteors have struck men.

"Inspired by a genius for labor, a gifted man may penetrate to the remotest knowable fact of a single science. To the newspaper of the future, such a specialist will contribute in his proper name. Space shall not hamper him. If three columns are essential to clearness and elaboration of his thought, three columns must be given him. Neither shall space be exacted of him. No column stint must vex his soul. When he wills it, a brief paragraph must hurl his thunderbolt.

"To-day, with a prodigal waste of labor, our reporters pursue in packs insignificant, fleeting bits of news. In jealous competition they flush a pin's point item, run it down, and triumphantly prepare it for exhibition, and the ragtag pay a ha'penny for a look. Will the newspaper of the golden age tolerate these side-show columns? I say no. Men who can spell liberty will not write such matter; a public that has attained to self-respect will not read it.

"As organized to-day, the local news agency does routine reporting well. Through it the daily events run off by time-table—court proceedings, the markets, police reports—obtain faithful chronicle. In industrial quality the news agency is a labor saver. By its inventor's quick and cheap methods the army of infant-class reporters now attached to the great dailies will lose their bread,

"The telegraph news system most profitable to the big daily is its own. To the giants among the great dailies the coöperative press reports form only an index-board on the highway of news. Into the waste basket are thrown the general press telegrams, and into the composing room go a great journal's own special dispatches. To the impecunious single sheet of a sub-metropolis the telegraph monopolies may impart life or issue the edict of death, but to the corpulent quadruple of a large city their enmity is but a trifling set-back.

"The art department of the daily paper is hardly beyond its first stages. Processes of illustration are improving yearly. The pictures of the dailies will yet equal those of the magazines.

"The handsomest daily paper of the United States is printed in the West. It is a typographic work of art. The display headings are symmetrical, the peg-top abandoned for the graceful hanging indention; the ads., even to the triple-column shriekers for dry-goods ever cheaper, are composed in light-face type; the pages are inked a uniform grayish black; the print paper is tough, not over glazed, its tint a neutral cream white. The designers of this chef d'oeuvre were the Giotto's and Brunelleschis to the Raphaels and Angelos of the coming journalistic renaissance.

"The perfect press is here. But a few years ago the visitor to the machine-room of a big daily saw half-a-dozen six, eight, ten, or even twelve cylinder presses whirling off the edition. With bewildering noises,—rumbling, creaking, groaning—the then won-

derful machines swallowed the white sheets, and in delivery flapped out the papers as a steamboat's paddles beat the water. Printed on one side, the papers were turned and run through the press again. Twenty to forty young men and women were required to feed the revolving cylinders, and standing at tables other gangs of helpers folded and counted. But to-day the web press draws to itself the white paper from a roll on a reel, prints both sides, folds each copy, and piles out the finished journals in fives and fifties, without intervention of human hand. The old-time feeders and folders and counters of the press-room have dropped off—to mingle with the artisan army displaced by machinery.

"The prevailing method of setting type five years ago was hardly a step beyond that practiced by Gutenberg. But such a thing could not last in this age. Line-casting machines are here now. Many a dazed and wondering newspaper compositor have they sent tramping after his discarded brethren of the press-room. A large daily paper using this invention saves twenty to fifty thousand dollars a year over hand typesetting.

"Before long every large city will adopt the Philadelphia plan of distributing newspapers. A carrier there runs a route safe from competition during his good behavior. Neglect of duty may bring complaint against him to the publication office from the injured subscriber. Publisher and reader are thus brought into the correct relation of shopkeeper and customer, the carrier a responsible agent between.

"With their increasing circulation, the influence of the greater class of the dailies is growing. Marblehead obtains from the big Boston paper more news than its local papers can afford to print, more wholesome sense-awakening prods than the home sheets dare give. And by a few independent Boston dailies all the towns in a radius of fifty miles from the Hub are better reported, and their erring elements held more strictly to account, than by their horde of feeble home papers. A few hours from Boston are Providence, Springfield, Hartford, Albany, each the center for an embryonic coming newspaper. In time a chain of these great institutions—the full grown daily newspaper—will cover the entire country, killing off alike the puny sheets of the small towns and the sicklier sort of the dailies.

"Thus I foresee the evolution of the millennial newspaper. When it comes, all America will not have five hundred periodical publications. The week-day edition of your thirty-page morning paper will cost you two or three cents; the Sunday edition, of sixty to one hundred pages, will cost you perhaps five.

"The perfect newspaper will photograph in its news columns the regenerated world. It will offer space to every reader who can put an idea into a letter to the editor. It will eschew abuse but abound in fair criticism. It will discuss politics disinterestedly; encourage in their duty the leaders of all parties; seek to improve the public taste; laugh away national prejudices; frown down sensationalism; enlighten the general judgment; help purify our language. It will

be upright, straightforward, unfalteringly courageous,
It will never, never lie. Its subscribers will have the
issues bound in monthly parts, to be stood up endwise
on a handy shelf in the library, near the encyclopedia!"



The Virtues of Mr. James Gray.

Less than twenty years ago, young James Gray, saddler and harness maker, was working at low wages in the East End slums of London. To-day, this same James Gray, gentleman, is living in the fashionable West End, a club man and church member, without fear of ever again doing a day's work.

When drawn out of his shell, as sometimes he is after dinner, Mr. Gray will say he owes his wealth to his business talents and his observance of the Christian virtues. He was enterprising in his youth: he boldly struck out for fortune. He was industrious; his early ventures were based on the fruits of his own toil. He was honest: he never gained a dollar in his life illegally. But doubters have been heard to say other things: That James Gray owes his wealth to sheer good luck, and that his virtues are as near nil as his business talent.

In his earlier days Gray suffered under two great fears—of becoming a pauper in this life, and of becoming a tortured soul in the hereafter. The first his bank account has dismissed; the second he has tried to down through giving to the church. Gray has little imagination. His views rarely lose connection with his personal experience. He himself is the center of a sphere just big enough for his soul.

The thought of his rise in life surprises and pleases him—so strange is it that he, cautious James Gray, should have ever been the hero of a business drama.

Well, it is strange. Gray once a hero of finance! He, so quietly settled now, every faculty occupied in arranging a little daily routine and in putting himself at peace, retrospectively and prospectively.

Hero or not, let the facts speak.

One day when just out of his apprenticeship, Gray took a long walk westward in the streets of London. He wandered up Whitechapel road and Fenchurch street, looking at the great shops, and, keeping on in the broad ways, at last found himself in Fleet street. As he moved along, gazing idly in the show windows, he noticed in a large shop a display of strange objects, the center of interest to groups of well-dressed people. Many others passing into the place, Gray entered, carried with the current. The show was free. It was of stones, grasses, grains, furs, from a far-off country. Most of the sightseers, conversing with interest, seemed familiar with the exhibits, but Gray knew no more about them than a child. He stared open mouthed, without thought or emotion. He was there merely through the herding instinct.

In the display was a big stuffed animal labeled "Grizzly Bear." At this furry creature Gray stolidly gazed. He did think a bit of them. He thought that the bear when alive could have eaten him up. He felt of the skin to judge of it as leather. An attendant called out "Hands off!" Gray put his hands in his pockets and gaped again. The stuffed bear was

set up on a rough box, in which it had been packed. On the side facing Gray was pasted part of a newspaper. Hemmed in by the crowd he listlessly looked at the print. He could read easy type. Fate directed his eyes toward a column of items. Fate further led him to read a certain paragraph midway in the column. Its purport set his heart thumping thrice, a thing extraordinary for Gray. What he read was this:

"There is a great scarcity of saddlers in this city. Brown & McKisson, the enterprising proprietors of the Elephant Corral saddlery and leather emporium, could give steady work to three more men, and Quirk & Stibble are obliged to reject some of the snap jobs from the New Mexican mule trains. Saddlers may depend upon making \$5 a day in Denver."

James Gray thought more thoughts in the next five minutes than he had in all his life before. Saddlers scarce somewhere! With hundreds idle in London! Wages \$5 a day. What was a \$? It must surely be more than a shilling, for saddlers in over-crowded London made five shillings a day. He had once known the value of a \$, but had forgotten. But saddlers were scarce somewhere. That was the point. If he could but go away off to where that newspaper was printed he might find work. He read the paragraph a second time. Some of it was Greek to him: "Elephant Corral," "snap job," "Mexican mule trains." But—saddlers were scarce. That he understood.

Gray went humbly to the attendant, begged pardon for daring to speak, and asked:

"'Ow much, sir, is a big S with two strokes down it, sir?"

"Eh?"

"W'y, sir, 'ere's a paper wot says a saddler kin make five somethings a day somew'eres."

"Oh, a saddler can make five dollars a day in Denver, I guess."

"Yesser; 'ow much is five dollars, sir? I furgit, sir?"

"Well, it's just about a pound sterling."

The words took away Gray's breath. Six quid a week! Bountiful heaven!

The attendant gave Gray other points. Denver was in Colorado. No, Colorado was not in Brazil. It was in the States. People there spoke English, not just as Gray did, but well enough for him to understand. There was no danger in Denver from the red Indians.

He tore the piece of newspaper off the bear's box and gave it to Gray, with directions how to get to Denver.

For Gray had had another thought. Might he not emigrate to that far-off country, where saddlers were scarce and their five somethings a day amounted to six pounds a week? It made him move. He sped homeward; he actually kept up with the sidewalk procession.

For three long months leaving his herd and haunts burdened his mind. Trying to think about it, he spoiled more work than ever, and he was only a botch at best. One might believe it a simple task for him to quit London. He was single; he had £20 in sav-

ings, and no one cared a farthing whether he went or whither. The only heart-throb at his departure would be in the breast of the idle saddler inheriting his bench in the shop. But the arbiter of the fate of empires never travailed more than did James Gray over throwing up his job and going to Denver. The answer might never have been reached had not his foreman in a passion thrown Gray out of the shop one day for spoiling leather. Gray decided to go to Denver as he landed with a bump on the pavement.

A week afterward he set off. He traveled to Liverpool third class; he crossed the Atlantic in the steerage; he went westward to the end of the railroad in an immigrant car; he trudged on to Denver with an ox-train. His long journey was made on less than a hundred dollars.

The very morning the ox-train wound its way up along the South Platte river and into Blake street, Denver, Gray, his newspaper slip from the bear's box in hand, sought the Elephant Corral. He rapped at the office door. On gaining entrance, hat in hand, he inquired for Brown & McKisson's saddlery.

"What do you want to know for?" asked a man in the office, a prosperous looking Westerner.

"H'i wants work, sir."

"What kind of work?"

"H'i'm a saddler, sir."

"How much do you want a week?"

Gray, lacking the spunk to counter-question, answered:

"Twenty dollars, sir,"

Saddlers, he feared, might no longer be scarce.

"Well," was the answer, "you may come along; I'll try you."

They were starting off together when another man in the office spoke up.

"Hold on," he said to Gray's would-be employer, "you don't get this fellow so cheap. Do you know your business, Johnny Bull?"

"Passably well, sir."

"Well, I'll give you twenty-five dollars a week in gold. Come with me."

"You can't take him from me," laughed the first man. "He's a beauty and comes high; but I must have him. Look here, Johnny, I'll give you thirty dollars a week and take you pig in a poke."

"Oh, you may corral him for a maverick!" said the other. And the good-humored bidding for botch Gray ceased.

Gray was taken to a small saddlery near by. That afternoon saw him astride a shop horse, sewing away.

On the Saturday of his first week at work, James Gray drew three times as much money as for any week before in his life. Looking at his wages in his hand, he felt that he, meritorious Gray, was realizing on his talents and enterprise. He had already a contempt for the inferior fellows away back in London earning less than ten dollars a week; they hadn't the spirit to throw up their jobs and come to America.

But Gray's self-approbation was not given free play. His sarcastic employer called him a prince among horse tailors, a fine artist in leather, a toe-fingered

seamstress. But, saddlers scarce, Gray held his job.

Gray stuck to his London habits. His board was the cheapest to be found. He wore his coarse English working clothes except on Sunday. He cautiously kept his own company. His sole recreation was a walk evenings to a brewery in West Denver, to drink one glass of beer and watch the Germans dance. When any one spoke to him he shied off lest it might cost him a treat.

In the shop the half-dozen other saddlers made him their butt. They told him there was nothing to him—no “music” in him, no blood to boil, no brains to think; he was sole leather, head and all. They dubbed him “Tugs,” a shop name for thick traces.

But Gray was not to be pained by raillery. Hunger and kicks had he suffered, and mere words never broke skin. He worked along in his blundering way. What he lacked in skill he partly made up by a dog-like faithfulness. He was ready at all times to take hold. His nature was servile. “Snap jobs” from plainmen at times kept him for twenty-four hours at his bench. The other hands refused to work overtime. They were independent. To them Gray was a product of social conditions which could never affect them. Once in a while they tried to worm out of him his views of the world, and his notions of the rights and wrongs in political and social affairs. But his opinions were few and befogged. His catechism had taught him to be content under divine Providence, and to be respectful to his master and thankful to him. He looked up to the nobility and the wealthy as his

betters; expected punishment to overtake all law-breakers; and believed that nature meant him and his likes, the wageworkers, to be common men. In London he had never presumed to speak of his rights or to think of the laws, matters settled by the magistrates and folks of high quality.

When Gray had been in Denver a year, the care of his savings grew oppressive. He had put away nearly a thousand dollars. Banks he distrusted, and to carry the money on his person would have kept him in fear. While in this obfuscation, his boss one day asked him if he had any money. Gray told him he had, and how much.

"So?" remarked Brown. "That's 'most as much as I have myself. You men keep me poor paying you big wages. Wait till the railroad gets here, and brings the tourist saddlers, wages will tumble, I'll bet."

"Why so, sir?" said Gray, not prompted by inquiry, but to say something.

"Oh, railroads equalize the labor market! Population will then press on your job, Tugsy. But to business. I want to raise cash. You know those open lots over at H street and Lawrence, near the Catholic church. I own them. I'll sell them to you for a thousand dollars. Go over and look at them this evening and tell me to-morrow morning what you think of the offer."

That evening Gray varied his walk, going half a mile to the south instead of over to the brewery. Standing about the street corners his boss had named, he looked over the four vacant squares about him.

No improvements whatever were on the land. Even sidewalks had not been laid. It was a bit of the open prairie that the extending streets had brought to town.

Gray, gazing at the vacant lots, weighed matters. Banks might burst; his money he might lose from his pockets; borrowers might abscond; but a town lot was anchored in the earth. These lots brought no regular interest, he knew, but they would be worth more, people said, when the railroad came. Still, what to do bothered him. Gray never reached any conclusion except in obedience to a force beyond him.

The next day Employer Brown informed Workman Gray that he was "busted." He would surely sell his shop and the lots for a mere song.

Gray therefore took a day off and from a lawyer ascertained the hows, whys, and whethers as to Brown's ownership in the lots. Brown then met Gray at the lawyer's office, and they made their trade. Gray ripped up one of his boot-legs and drew out six hundred dollars in certificates of deposit, and from a calf-skin belt he took four hundred in bills. He gave the money to Brown. Brown passed over to the lawyer a piece of paper representing the land, which was handed to Gray. So all was done legally.

Brown next tried to sell Gray the shop. But Gray, out of cash, refused. He declined to be enterprising and borrow on his lots.

That night Brown, unexpectedly to his friends, left Denver. Next day a swarm of creditors pounced on his property and in a week had auctioned off every

article in the shop. Thus out of a job, Gray found work dull. Brown's creditors were after his lots, but Gray's lawyer undertook to avert the disaster for some cash and half the land. Poor Gray wished he had never strayed from Stepney.

But in a little while James found work at twenty dollars a week. For more than a year he stitched away, paying his landlady and his lawyer about all he made. By that time the suits over the four vacant blocks were ended. One block only remained to him. The law and the lawyer had taken the other three. His thousand dollars, Gray figured, had dwindled to two hundred and fifty.

Now that the vacant square was his and could not get away, Gray found pleasure in walking about over it. One evening while so enjoying himself he overheard two well-dressed men talking real estate.

"Look at these lots here," said one. "They'll be right in the heart of the coming city. If I owned them to-day, I wouldn't part with them for two thousand dollars apiece. No telling what they'll be worth in five years."

"Let us buy them and hold them on spec," suggested the other.

A day or so later one of these men called on Gray and offered him a thousand dollars for his vacant square. Gray, wondrous wise, hardly thought he would sell. He had decided to stay in Denver, and as a landlord help build up the city.

Gray lived on in Denver for five years. Wealth poured into the place from the Leadville mines. Den-

ver land values moved upward daily, almost hourly. While an army of builders were extending the business district, a certain block in its very centre remained covered with shanties. It was Gray's. He leased the ground for short terms, gathering rents while its value rose. He refused to sell. At the end of each term he leased again at higher rates. At last fine rows of stone and brick went up on his lots, to yield him the income of a man of wealth. Then Gray quit work at the bench and went to live in England. His virtues had brought him a fortune.

Homeward bound, Gray lolled in Pullman cars to New York, crossed the Atlantic in the cabin of an ocean greyhound, and went down to London by rail first-class.

Thus it is that James Gray has a neat establishment in exclusive Tyburn, is member of a club and pewholder in a church. Thus Gray has become an example of deserving merit to ambitious young men. Thus is he enabled to relate stories of his career—how he is now reaping the rewards of his labor and abstinence when young; how employers once bid against each other for the boon of his work, such an expert was he; how his efforts were tireless in assisting to build up one of the most beautiful cities in the States; how he exercised business foresight in Denver, when, a member of its real estate exchange, he helped to provide the essential element for its future population—vacant land.

No sentiment connects James Gray with the scenes of his youth in Stepney and Wapping. Never has he

gone back to the East End to look at the old shop or to treat the old boys. Nor is he too tolerant with the unsuccessful. Why cannot they do as he has done—display enterprise, courage, foresight, intelligence, and the kindred virtues, and leave poverty behind them?



A Modern Co-Operative Colony

[A Whimsy.]

To the Editor: Dear Sir—As you are aware, I am literary editor of your contemporary, the “Daily Ledger,” my chief duty being to pass upon manuscripts. Of the heaps that come to me I make various disposition. Many I kill, throwing them dismembered into the waste basket. Quantities, all that are sent in with return stamps, I mail back to the writers. Among those that I accept, few appear in print as they come from the authors. Our “butchers” cut them up and select their best meat, which they re-embody and enliven with a spark from the “Ledger’s” own soul. But besides accepted and rejected manuscripts there is one other sort—the assisted. Sometimes, in deciding the fate of a story offered us, my mental scales fail to settle well at the balance. Conscience tells me that the idea of the writer ought not to perish from the earth, that if not wanted for the “Ledger” it might perchance be welcomed elsewhere. A manuscript of this kind I now transmit to you for your paper. Albeit the author says he is of our staff, I do not know him. I suppose he believed the assertion would im-

part to his story an air of probability. A queer fellow, to try such work on us. But, as you know, ideas of every sort float in to us on the tides of our mail.

Very truly yours,

THOMPSON, "Ledger."

Said he of ripe wisdom, the city editor:

"Have you ever heard tell of the modern coöperative colony?"

Flippantly replied he of wisdom not so ripe, the member of the regular staff here present:

"I admit never to have heard."

"Go find where it is and write it up."

No instructions from editor. No questions from reporter. Face to face with a test of his talent, off went the latter like a shot, an intellectual messenger boy, his duty before him, his carfare in his pocket.

Police headquarters, two public libraries, an intelligence office, a second-hand bookstore, five secretaries of central labor unions—these visited the reporter had run down the whereabouts of the modern coöperative colony.

It was within telescope sweep of the west tower flagpole of the Brooklyn Bridge. Two hours later, the reporter, on his errand, alighted from a train at a suburban station. Across fields, at right angles to the main line, ran a double-track street railway, cutting the landscape in two. The reporter observed passengers from his train entering a little horseless car at the terminus of the cross-fields line. The car stood on the left hand track, on the ground level, mark

you. With a sense of coming developments, the reporter boarded the car. The last passenger to get in turned a brake at the rear. Smoothly, hoisted by an automatic gravitation apparatus, the car was set over square on the righthand track—elevated on trestles, mark you, ten or twelve feet high. Another twist of the brake and the car slowly started. In a moment, gravity propelled, it was whizzing on the level road, its impetus sending it two miles in four minutes. Then it stopped. The car was at the edge of a considerable town.

Meanwhile the reporter had begun work. Before the car slowed up he had obtained from a fellow-traveler a cigar and matter enough to fill two columns, if judiciously written.

"So you know nothing about us?" said the man, a farmer-looking person, with a hearty air.

"Less than nothing," said the reporter. "Perhaps you could take half a day off and show me around."

"Ah!" said the farmer. "I see by your diffidence that you are a newspaper man. I know your cravings: I'll both show you around and give you a dinner."

"Thanks," said the "Ledger" man; "my report shall contain your name twice, spelled correctly."

"Stand here a moment and look about," said the farmer. They were on the platform at the end of the two-mile switch-back. "Look up along all these streets running from this point, like fansticks. You see, off a way in each is a slight bend, promising you something pretty beyond. Trees lining every street! Not a fence anywhere, not a telegraph pole, not an

unsightly thing. See all those neat cottages, standing separate. Mighty different from the city, eh?"

"Yes—in italics!" said the reporter. "But what's that big house?"

"Oh; that's town hall. Walk over there with me. I'll tell you things on the way."

"Wait—my note-book!" With a jerk and a pull the reporter's pencil was digging on a blank page. The farmer-looking man continued, as they walked:

"You see, this thing began with Johnson. Ten years ago, Johnson, a pale clerk in an office, grew tired of New York. But he couldn't afford an out of town place in a neighborhood a peg above malaria and the rough working classes. So he got to figuring things out. They say he read books on coöperation and communities, but they didn't tell just what he wanted to know. So he sat down and made out a list of conditions he wanted and of drawbacks he didn't want. What he mainly wanted was, to work in the city and earn high pay, and to live in the country and find things cheap. Then he would like to practice with his neighbors any form of practical, non-interfering coöperation that came up, with liberty to pull out whenever it suited him. He wished neither to pioneer alone in the woods nor to mix up all his affairs with other people's. He sought coöperation in the principle of competition."

"First diamond prize for Johnson if he guessed the puzzle," put in the "Ledger" man.

"Well mebbe he did," replied the farmer, reflective-

ly. "Mebbe he did. His wants and didn't wants were many, but mebbe he hit the happy answer."

They had reached the town hall.

"Sit down a minute on this bench," said the farmer, after mounting the portico steps, "till I tell you how Johnson went about his plans. Looking over prospects, it occurred to him that an hour from the city was Bytown, where twenty trains stopped a day. Bytown lots were held high, but here, two miles from Bytown, ordinary farming land was cheap. Then the idea of a gravity switch-back railroad occurred to Johnson, and that idea made this coöperative colony possible. Back he went to work and tried thinking again. Slowly he got up a list of people home hungry like himself, raised a colony company, and bought a good wide stretch of land here. No one could become a member except on condition that he would improve his land by so many dollars in a given length of time. There were about a hundred shareholders at the beginning, and when they set about dividing the thousand acres they'd bought some feared a deal of confusion. But this is what they did: It was agreed that no member need fence his land unless he wanted to, that the owner of live stock must keep it off other people's premises. Then those that didn't want stables all took lots together. It was found that hardly anybody wanted more than an acre—just enough for a house and a bit of lawn. So the members made up about a hundred acre areas, of a value as nearly equal as could be guessed; they drew lots for them and allowed a few weeks for trading among

themselves. When all were satisfied and each was in possession of his acre, the company was done with that hundred lots except to see that they were improved as per contract. Most of the main tract being left over, it was unanimously voted the company should manage it for a term of years."

At this moment a car with a load of passengers started on the switch-back for Bytown. The two men, watching it until it disappeared in the distance, commented on the cheapness of the system—no power, no driver, no conductor.

"Where was I?" resumed the farmer.

"And the town grew like magic!" said the reporter, consulting his notes.

"Did I say that?"

"Well, anyway, I've got it down."

"Good enough! Yes, the town did grow wonderfully. A hundred heads of families, who had been planning their homes for years, put up a hundred houses here in a jiffy. The crowd had different good notions, and the result was anything but insipid architectural uniformity. We got right off what folks in city suburbs have usually to wait years for—a good neighborhood and freedom from nuisances. When the members came to need gas and water, there was talk of having the town land company, as Johnson's organization was called, to undertake the supply. But some said no—they hadn't joined for such a purpose, or they didn't burn gas—and another company was formed. It put in sewers and gas and water pipes, and later on drained the town lands and kept them

in sanitary condition. This second company—the improvement company, it was called—was made up of citizens of our new town, which, by the way, was named Newtown. New town; new ideas! Since most of the householders of the town were stockholders in the improvement company, you may be sure that self-interest caused both public and private work here to be done cheaply and well.”

“No eye like the master’s eye,” ventured the reporter.

“Just so. Well, it wasn’t long until newcomers began buying lots from the general tract, values being raised from time to time at meetings of the land company. A big recreation field was laid out, and baseball clubs and picnic parties from the city brought more money to the treasury. The need of a meeting hall was next felt. A new company was formed”—

“What! Couldn’t one of the old companies build the hall?”

“That wasn’t their business. Have you, as reporter, anything to do with the presswork of the ‘Ledger?’ Of course not. Now, it’s the same with us here. Each distinct public work has its own voluntary agency. One of the new ideas, that, of our coöperative-competitive community.”

“Very good. The town hall company”—

“Put up this building. Fine, isn’t it? One coöperative society’s house on another coöperative society’s land. The hall company, of course, put up the best building it could for the least money. That proved best and cheapest for everybody concerned.

Here, for instance, in this corner of the building is the general store. It was the town hall company's aim to get up the big store at the lowest possible cost—wasn't it?—to exclude competition, as any colonist could build one on his own land if he wished. The same with the restaurant in that other corner. So the principle goes, right along. The big meeting hall, the library room, the three or four small halls, the offices—well, the town hall company provides all these in this building at a lower rental than any one else could. See this telephone central? It's partly town hall property, partly an inventor's. An electrician came here wanting to try a new telephone. People let him put his 'phones in their houses, his lines were centered in this ground floor room, and now housewives order steaks and sugar from the store; and for the matter of that they can telephone to New York or Philadelphia from their own kitchens. Here, this room's the post-office. In this one big building pretty much all the household supplies for the town are to be had. More than that, our people have learned the art of coöperative buying without investment."

"How?"

"Why, folks at first bought things in New York, carrying them out home evenings. Along came a storekeeper and made an offer. If fifty persons would agree that each should buy of him a hundred dollars' worth of staple groceries a year, he'd sell the goods to them at a certain stated point above wholesale prices in New York, prices which any one could find

out. Besides, he'd keep a good general stock; experts could inspect his goods at all times, he'd be answerable. His idea took, and that storekeeper has customers for miles around now. His rent's low. It can't be increased much, for if it was he'd move somewhere across the way. On the other hand, he must sell lower than New York figures, else folks here'd leave him. And so, through unobstructed competition, things in his line reach the customer at bottom prices."

"There's a dentist's office," remarked the reporter; "is he town dentist?"

"In a sense he is. He came here independently, and he may go when he wishes. His business none too good at first, he caught the coöperative fever. He liked Newtown, could live cheap here, get books from the library free, have good eating at the restaurant, and go to the city often. So, what did he do? He went around and induced a lot of people—I don't know just how many—to give him so much a year to keep their teeth in order, his charges about half city rates. And about that let me tell you. Our folks here have got smart on a whole lot of things. In the city, when you've trouble with your teeth it also often means trouble with a dentist. But here our people know what good dentistry is, and are aware of the importance of the teeth. As the dentist wants to stay here, he does his best to keep up a good name. His case is typical. Blacksmith, carpenter, milkman—all run their business the same way."

"Has this paradise any doctors?"

"You'd hardly believe it, but the town improvement company employs a doctor. It makes money doing so. The better the general health, the more wealth for everybody. That doctor and the company engineer work together for sanitation, so that we are well night exempt from preventable disease. Our youth are growing up strong. We have one or two doctors besides, carrying on their profession the way the dentist does his."

The farmer now rose from the bench to conduct the reporter through the interior of the town hall. In the ground floor, besides the general store, the post-office, the telephone and telegraph offices, was a well appointed restaurant. As they passed it, the neat appearance of the restaurant help, which was feminine, attracted the reporter's attention, which was masculine.

"Oh, yes!" said the farmer. "They're as good as anybody else here. Mostly young women in straitened circumstances in the city, they thought it better to come out here and wait on us than be factory hands there. These girls are not made to feel they are servants. By the way, it's a first-rate restaurant. Nearly all our people take their dinners there, the restaurant man selling meal tickets by the hundred at half-price. He competes with a housekeeper's own dining table and drives her out of her business."

The second story of the building was divided into meeting rooms, one a large hall. In the third story was a fine library hall, lighted from above. On all sides of it were alcoves.

"For readers wishing to be alone," explained the farmer. "A good window light in each alcove, a typewriter, and materials for writing. The library is free. All the books, except new periodicals, are loaned without cost."

The roof reached, the reporter, on gaining the view, whistled:

"Phew!"

"Eh! What d'ye think of that? God's country?"

"Finished, isn't it? Every square rod put to some use—what's not built on is in lawn, yard, garden, field, wood, or shady road. How is it there's nothing forbidding, no swamp, no clay bank, no rocky field, in sight? The entire landscape is green, and house dotted—red, white, yellow?"

"Partly work of the improvement company; partly work of a village society which aims to beautify our one little part of the world. The society sods one bare spot, plants trees at another, and sets out shrubbery on the next."

"But the houses! All kinds, how well arranged—without arrangement!—Queen Annes; shingle boxes; rococos; artisans' cottages; Swiss chalets; Dutch gables; Italian villas; new Colonial mansions! Yes; yes! Mem.: Good for two dollars' worth of space for me in the 'Ledger,' rapturesque description! What's that other big house over there?"

"That building is the school company's."

"The school company's?"

"Yes, sir."

"No public school here?"

"No, sir."

"Alack! alas! No palladium of our rights—no cradle for liberty! What have we come to? How about the poor who won't send their children?"—

"Now; young chap, just look around you. Take a sniff of this air! Who that breathes it would neglect to educate his children? If a parent could be found here unable to pay, his children would go right along to school anyway. The town company would foot the bill."

"Maybe. Out here my New York judgment is a little off."

"Yes, sir; the school company. There live in this community to-day about five thousand people, all told—fifteen hundred of them of school age. On the same general terms that this town hall was built a company has constructed the school-house. It is complete in every way, and large enough for all our children. Any teacher can rent a school room there or a set of rooms, at low cost, and open school. And any citizen may send his children or not, as suits him. All that the community requires is that the children shall be taught, somehow. Parents soon find out which teachers are competent and what studies and books the children prefer. A no-account teacher has a slim school."

"Is there a high school course?"

"No high school, no low; no good marks, no bad; no graduating, no diploma. A parent watches his child's progress, he knows its needs, and it is for him to judge when it is qualified for its probable career."

Fact is, our children don't go to school, except to kindergarten, until they are full ten years old. Books everywhere, they pick up reading very young; and juvenile entertainments always coming off, they study of themselves to take parts. When they are at school, hand training and eye training take up much of the time. Our people here believe in raising young human beings a good deal like other young creatures—feed 'em well, let 'em play, give 'em their first start in health."

Walking down stairs, the two men glanced into one of the small meeting rooms.

"Why so many?" asked the questioning man.

"So that any one who wants to talk can hire a hall," replied the answering man. "Some of our people have fads, and they air them here. Say a man wishes to impart instruction and to enjoy criticism; he invites a score of people to come and hear what he has to say. If his ideas are good, it will be noised about. Then fifty or a hundred of those interested will hire the large hall for an evening, send invitations to friends, and the speaker will have a good audience."

"How about bores and blatherskites?"

"If a man fond of talking finds that few attend when he has invited a party to hear him in a small meeting room, he ought to suspect that his forte may be chopping wood; or if he finds he himself is never invited to a private talk, similar doubts may haunt him. In either case, he is on the way to mending; he is half awake to his failings."

"Can outsiders hire a hall?"

"Certainly."

"I suppose you have all sorts coming—even Socialists and Anarchists."

"We had a Socialist once in the big hall. When he got to talking about the coming coöperation through State compulsion, our folks thought him a joker. He failed to get a single reply. They just asked him to stay with us a spell, look around, and feed up."

"Did any Anarchists ever come?"

"Not unless this Socialist fellow was Anarchist too. He didn't say anything about bloody revolution, so I suppose he wasn't. Good Lord! I wish such unwholesome people would stick to the old American ideas of each man working for himself, minding his own business, and enjoying his own property and production. Don't you see how we have done it here? We've cut the middleman's profits down to just nothing at all except decent wages. We've left behind us the hog landlords of New York, we ourselves sharing among us whatever of land value there is. And as for interest, usury, so far as permanent residents are concerned we use little money. No monopoly value of any kind is bred in this community."

"Get along without money, do you?"

"I told you about the meal tickets at the restaurant; they are hard rubber checks, and pass among us for cash. Then, everybody runs a book at the store, squaring it up at the end of the month nine times in ten by a bank check. Every one here has an account in a bank in the city. I can go weeks in this town

without handling a coin. But, of course, our people must have a little cash available, and so the store does a banking business. Its deposits so greatly exceed the demand for loans that it lends money in the locality at two per cent. By Jove, if we had many communities like ours in this country, money would go a-begging and would be lent for nothing beyond security."

They were now in the street again. The reporter looked back at the town hall.

"A fine structure," he said. "By the way, where's the public buildings?"

"The which?"

"The court-house, the mayor's office, and so on?"

"We've got none," said the farmer.

"No! How's that? Improved them out of existence?"

"Well, we've got no use for them. We've got no government."

"No government! And no taxes?"

"Not a cent."

"Police?"

"None. You've seen a gas-light in a city store replace the night watchman? Our telephones and electric lights stand for police. Every one here, in his pride of citizenship, is policeman over himself. To suppress outside barbarians, however, our young men have a volunteer police corps. And woe betide an intruding vandal! No, sir; absolutely no government in this town. No mayor; no council; no police; no road commissioner; no tax assessor; no ward poli-

ticians. We have a fatherly old lawyer, who by common consent serves as surrogate and recorder and sometimes as judge. All the law cases usually managed by such officers elsewhere he settles here. If all communities were like ours the general government itself would be a mere skeleton. But here we are at my house."

They passed up a graveled walk, under wide spreading trees, to a pleasant cottage.

"Let me tell you," said the farmer, "how I built this house. When the colony was formed I was working in the city, living up to what I made. Our first land shares sold at \$100. To make up my hundred I pawned my watch. The first summer out here my wife and I picnicked in a tent. As everybody lived outdoors we were in fashion. My house I had planned a decade before, but that year I was only able to build a kitchen and dining-room, with two attic rooms over them. I borrowed from a building and loan association. Nearly all my neighbors had joined such associations, different ones, don't you see, so that all could get money soon. I took four shares, paying one dollar a week, on which I borrowed \$500. I had this paid off in a year. My house and big lot clear of debt, a builder offered to put up a front, taking mortgage on the rear, and looking for his pay in quarterly installments. He would put me up a seven-room front, with plumbing, for \$2,000. I was about closing with him when a new idea cropped up. Somebody proposed a mutual bank in addition to the store-keeper's bank. We carried it through. Besides col-

ony folks, neighboring farmers and dealers and building supply men came in, so as to complete a circle of exchanges. The basis of our currency was insured real estate belonging to the members, to be mortgaged to not more than half the insurance. The storekeeper, who was our banker, we paid for his time, his clerk hire, and incidentals, with no interest at all for the money itself."

"Can't see how it worked," said the man with the busy pencil.

"Why, take the case of my builder. He came into the mutual bank. What with bonuses, risky jobs, and heavy interest, he had been paying ten per cent. for his working capital. Had I taken his original offer he would have had to charge me for all that in turn. But when in our bank, he paid only about one per cent. The mutual bank competes with other banks precisely as the building association competes with landlord's rent. It brings the dormant capital of the members into activity. The shareholders bank on their own property, neither taking nor paying interest. Dead real estate is made live productive capital safely. In my case my builder was able to put up the front part of my house for \$1,600 instead of \$2,000."

"What was your currency?"

"Negotiable promissory notes, made out in all possible amounts, from a cent to a thousand dollars. We called them 'government dodgers.' In issuing them we avoided the tax of your busybody State on private bank circulation."

"Good," said the reporter, "money based on nothing but paper."

"Bad guess," returned the farmer. "Money based on tangible and immovable wealth. No gold; no bonds; no privilege. Here around us was our real property, and there on paper was a valid promise to surrender that property if goods passing into one's possession were not paid for. A short cut for labor exchanges."

"How did you pay off your own mortgage?"

"I couldn't pay my builder in labor directly, but I did it indirectly. I earned wages working in my odd hours for the storekeeper-banker. He paid me off in mutual bank money. This I paid my builder. He paid his hands with it. They spent it at the store. And so it had gone around and had done its work. Property guaranteed that money at the start and labor canceled it in the end."

"How long did your debt worry you?"

"I paid it off in four years. I went into the town hall company, the improvement company, and in fact nearly every town enterprise that turned up. I've worked on in the city ever since, and lived out here,—lived well. With three thousand dollars ahead here, I am as well off as if I had thirty thousand dollars in the city. Why, I can borrow at any time from my fellow-members here, without interest, and on my good name alone, a thousand dollars."

"In New York I might borrow five," rejoined the reporter.

"That's a good deal, sir; an evidence, however, of

your high character," said the farmer, going on, intent on his story. "As to life insurance, we refuse the ground-floor rates of the big companies, because we have our own mutual societies. There are eight or nine hundred adult males who on the death of one of the number pay in five dollars apiece, a matter of good four thousand dollars for the widow or other legatees. Then there is mutual insurance for women, and again for children. In fact, by voluntary insurance here we have so distributed our burdens that they are light for all."

"Who's your leading capitalists?" asked the reporter.

"Got none. Every one can accumulate something here if he works; no one can heap up riches that others produce. We've got no financial geniuses; no political saviors; no landed gentry; no rising Napoleons of business. Our talent, our energy and enterprise, our progressive ideas are spread out all over the community. Success is in every house. And, young man, the beauty of this colony is that our perfectly civilized results are achieved without any one poking his nose into the business of the rest. Why, there's no place on earth where a man could be more of a recluse if he wanted to than right here in Newtown. But no one holds aloof. Since there are no pestiferous busybody officials to boss and abuse peaceful folks, we move with little friction. We're all disposed to help our neighbors, but each halts before compelling anybody to do anything. We have no

election brawls, no partisanship, no attempt to eat up one another's substance, no"—

"Speaking of eating," interrupted the note-taker, "it's just an hour to my train time."

"Then we'll drop figurative talk of eating, and eat actual good things. Come over to the restaurant."

Seated at table, the dishes before them, the reporter remarked:

"Don't mind me if I keep quiet. Just talk on."

And the colonist aired his materialized hobby. Yes; any citizen might do just as he pleased in that town if he interfered with no one else. Some even kept boarders. The residents took advantage of every co-operative idea developed in society, from railroad commutation to the public library. There were many self-improvement organizations—the Teach Yourself Club, mostly young folks learning how to run a house, to paint it, repair it and do away with plumbers' bills; the Housekeepers' No-Work Circle, which sought to minimize the sweeping, cooking, and washing; the Society for the Prevention of Unwelcome Callers, whose members promenaded in the town hall and its galleries, to see and to be seen, but who never called on a neighbor without invitation. Live, modern, progressive Newtown!

The two men enjoyed themselves. The farmer emptied his budget of facts; the reporter filled his inner man. The pleasant half hour over, they walked to the switch-back car. There, the reporter said:

"You haven't given me your name."

"Jacob Johnson."

"What! Johnson, the founder; the original Jacob?"

"Johnson, the father of Newtown."

"I took you for a farmer!"

"Well, though I still hold my desk in town, I work in the garden here at home, and I like old clothes to knock about in. Rural life, you know."

"Yes, you've found Eden! Good-bye, city farmer Johnson. Happy Johnson! But—you've ruined my character."

"How so?"

"After I hand in to the 'Ledger' the yarn you've told me I'll be known to my craft as the unmatchable liar."

"Well, but"—said the farmer, warmly shaking the reporter's hand—"down there at the newspaper factories, that reputation won't hurt your professional character, will it?"

Workaday and Commonplace.

John Martin and William Martin are cousins. Both are married and approaching middle life. The ways of each, in thinking and acting, have taken root.

The two men differ widely. Their habits have sequences which, as unfolded, carry them further apart. In character the two compared suggest two webs of handwoven texture—the one, product of a careful weaver, strong, neatly made, regular in warp and woof; the other, turned off by a heedless worker, sleazy stuff, specked with defects. Each reflects himself in his home, his reputation, his choice of neighborhood, the budding character of his children, and in his impress on society.

Both are poor. This told, how much is said! Year in and year out both face the gravest of earthly problems—how to keep the wolf from the door. The battle with the wolf tells on every other act of their lives. It wears away their forces. It circumscribes their activities. Sometimes it affrights them, like a nightmare. Each believes he is doing his best to solve the ever-present problem.

John and William live far apart in the city and work at different occupations. They see each other but seldom. When one appears at the other's home, the

one visited suspects an interested motive in the visitor. In the past year, only one exchange of calls has taken place. Unpleasant memories to each are those occasions now. Why, the details will tell.

One morning last spring William walked a long way across town, from his home in an overcrowded quarter of the East Side, to the one part of the West Side down town where families in middling circumstances can still live in a whole house. John lives there, but he only occupies a small part of a house. On turning into John's quiet street, it struck William that there is no place like the East Side for life. Rather a clean little street, John's, to be sure, but dull. It suited John, who was slow.

John's abode is on the top floor of a three-story brick house. When he opened the hall door of his small parlor in answer to a rap, and saw William at his threshold, his greeting could hardly be styled effusive. Instantly there had risen in his mind a query as to William's object in calling, and whatever pleasure he might have forefelt at the prospect of William's company for a brief hour painful doubts drove away. And William, believing John foresaw a request for a loan, could on his part affect little heartiness. So the two shook hands, as middle-aged relatives do who know each other too well.

Each, in a half-hearted way, asked about the other's family. A pause. Then William, his expression uneasy, shifted in his chair, and cleared his throat. He was about to come to the point. But Mrs. John came in from a rear room. Mrs. John, true woman, bravely

played hostess toward her husband's relative. Her handshake was cordial. How was cousin Anna? Did Minnie experience any bad effects from the chicken-pox? And dear little Freddy, chubby little man, how he must be growing! Cousin Anna had often been in her mind lately; she owed cousin Anna a call; but it was so far over to the East Side; and so inconvenient to get there; and she herself had so much to do; and the children's clothes took up so much of her time; and she feared leaving the house while the builders were next door—some one might enter and steal. Wouldn't William come out back and see the improvements next door?

William and John went with Mrs. John to a rear window and there heard her expatiate on the improvements and the view. The situation she thought very pleasant. Their flat was quiet, cool in summer, and warm in winter. And no nuisances around—of sight, or smell, or sound!

William assented with lumpish chivalry. But what was forced on his attention stirred up resentments in him. Pleasant views, and choice situation, and nice neighbors—this talk smacked of the rule of the woman in John's household. William took things as he found them, and what was good enough for him had to be good enough for his wife. He ruled in his family. And things in his flat were never going to be run to suit the fancies of John's wife. Not by a good deal.

John's apartments were furnished plainly, but were clean and neat. John's two little boys, who were quietly gazing at William, were comfortably dressed,

but their clothes William recalled seeing as a suit on John. Their ten-year-old sister, who was washing dishes, seemed happy in one of her mother's old house dresses cut down. To William, primness and pinching economies were irksome. John and his wife had ideas different from his. When flush he dressed up Anna and the children, but when he was hard pushed they had to wear out their once modish toggery.

By the time John and William were alone in the parlor again, little waves of displeasure had so roiled William that he could state his errand bluntly.

"Jack," he said, "I've come to ask a loan of twenty-five dollars."

John's face grew red, and he looked at the floor. William, after the plunge, was ready to affect an easy air.

"Bill," said John slowly, "I have twenty-five dollars, and I won't put you off saying I haven't, but I haven't got it to spare. It seems I can't get ahead. I don't average more than fifty dollars a month the year round. Elizabeth and I save in every way, but there's five of us to keep. Elizabeth earns about ten dollars a month on fancy work, and that we manage to save. We have a little something in the bank. I have my rent ready for next Monday. That's how I'm fixed. Bill, you always get along somehow, money or no money."

"Of course I do. But don't be so solemn about it. You act as if I wanted you to give me the money. I don't. I only want to borrow it. If I had it and you wanted it, do you think I'd refuse you?"

"Well, Bill, I don't want to offend you; but so far I've got along without asking of anybody."

"Yes, I know. You like to be able to say that, and I don't care whether I can say it or not. That's the difference. You're always straining every nerve. How much rent do you pay here?"

"Twenty-five dollars."

"Phew! Now, don't you see? In your way you waste as much as I do. I get as much livin' space as this for thirteen; three dollars a week the better of you. That's more to me than to a landlord. If you fall behind a couple of months, where are you? I can ketch up four months where you do two."

"Bill, you may live in your thirteen-dollar tenement house. I won't."

"Airs, airs."

"No airs. I buy surroundings with the twelve dollars extra."

"I take no stock in surroundin's. There's just as good people in our tenement house as there are in this street."

"Every bit."

"Well, then?"

"Well, I know what I mean when I say I'm paying for surroundings, and I'll cut off every other extra expense before I cut off surroundings."

"Well, no landlord'll ever plunder me the price of surroundin's. But look here, I only want that loan for a week. I'll pay it back the Saturday before your rent day."

"But, Bill, you owe me ten dollars now."

"I know; I've had it ready for you half a dozen times, but it's so far over here. The plain truth is, Jack, I'm 'way back in my rent and I must raise twenty-five dollars. I'll pawn for the rest. I must get the money or move out—where, I don't know. Will you give it to me or won't you?"

John reflected awhile.

"Wait till I ask Elizabeth."

John gone, William leaned back in his chair with his feet on another. Not that he felt comfortable, but it was his habit to take things easy. He tried to think that Jack was fussy over a trifle. He was free with his own money—when he had any. He liked to live when he did live. He wanted to spend money with his friends and to be sociable. But Jack moved in a rut and saw little. Why, he never went into a bar-room!

John had left the doors ajar behind him. William saw the couple in the rear room consulting. John was explaining, Elizabeth listening. Then she turned away, and a moment after came back and counted out some bills into John's hand. They saved dollar by dollar, William saw. He caught from Elizabeth the words: "The poor wife and children! and it's a pity of him, too."

John came in and handed William the twenty-five dollars. William blurted out:

"Jack, I've been carrying this thing off lightly, but to tell the truth I've had a close shave. They were goin' to dispossess me. I'll never forget you and Elizabeth."

Elizabeth came in to bid William good-bye. Her sprightly little ways were subdued. But this show of sympathy irritated William; he wasn't just yet an object of compassion. John saw him off down at the front door.

William took his way homeward. His mood changed by spells—drifting toward satisfaction as he thought of the money in his pocket; toward envy as he recalled the couple who had put it there. In the next street he bought a few cigars with one of the bills, and then, since he had change, some candy for the children. He spent two carfares riding home.

* * * * *

It was well along in the present winter when John Martin left his West Side home one evening and walked across town and down on the East Side. On the street John's appearance was that of a man comfortably well-to-do. "Perhaps better off than the average" might the observer judge who would glance a second time at John's heavy overcoat, good hat and shoes, and silk umbrella.

William lives in a populous block. As John saw it that evening its picturesque rows of window and street lights suggested swarming life. Saloons were advertised by lights in clusters; shops by electric lights suspended before displays of goods. The ground floor of every house was a shop; above, for four, five, or six stories, were the many window lights in the abodes of the tenement poor. On the sidewalks crowds were hurrying to and fro. John, looking at

the big houses, remembered that ten to twenty families lived in every one of them. He asked himself if these people lived so for want of means or simply from the instinct for herding—a craving to be with the mass, a desire akin to that for drink.

A boy and a girl were walking in front of John. He noticed their clothing; it was frippery, much worn. Pathetic, thought he, this faded gaudiness mocking at childhood in poverty.

John, looking for the house numbers, happened to see William in a doorway, talking with a stout man in a tall hat and loud clothes. He stood and waited. He heard the man say:

"This fifty dollars pays you in full." When the man had gone into the house, John spoke to William.

"Hello, Jack!" responded William, shoving the bills in his vest pocket. "I haven't seen you for 'most a year."

"Yes; I'd like to talk with you a while."

"All right; come over to where I live."

They crossed the street, entered a mean tenement, and made their way up several flights of stairs. They went up in silence, John disliking the smell and in no mood for commonplaces, and William disturbed, foreseeing the purpose in John's visit. On the fourth story was William's quarter of a floor. They went into the living room.

"Anna!" called William, "here's John!"

Anna came forth from the dark, primping her hair. She became visible as a large woman, her dress a dull red jersey, an old velveteen skirt, and run-down slip-

pers. When she thrust a hand at John in welcome, and volubly made excuses for her appearance, John listened to her apologetic litany as if it meant something. But Anna never greeted him in any other way. Her talk was cut short by a boy and a girl coming in quarreling. She slapped the youngsters' faces and ordered them to the kitchen. They were the two John had noticed in the street dressed in faded frippery.

Anna remained in the room with John and William. Perhaps she had divined both John's errand and William's desire to browbeat diffident John, to prevent him asking for his own.

John made a brief stay. On leaving he asked William to step into the lower hallway. When they were there he said:

"Bill, I want to ask you something about this new reform party in politics. I"—

"Oh," broke in Bill, "I've nothing to do with it any more. I jumped out of it last fall. Labor politics is no good. A workingman's party bursts into a big flame and then in a jiffy it's out again like a pile of shavin's."

"That may be. But I've been looking up the principles of this new movement, and they are mine. I could go into politics on such principles."

"Principles be hanged. Politics don't know no principles. Drop that idea."

"Very well. I see you've dropped it. Now another matter: Bill, it's pretty near a year since I let you have that twenty-five dollars."

"Yes; why didn't you come after it long ago, when I had it?"

"You said when you borrowed it you would pay it back in a week."

"Well, I couldn't, and it's no use talking about that now."

"I had to break my savings bank account for my rent that time. Bill, I've had no work for three months."

"Well, I suppose you've had sense enough to quit that big rent you paid."

"I'm in the same floor yet. But I'm not here to talk about that. You owe me in all thirty-five dollars. I simply ask you for my own."

John, like many over-cautious men, was plain spoken when obliged to act.

"Yes; and when I can get what I owe you I'll pay you. But you have money always. How did you lose your job?"

"They got machines."

"Well, you'd money stowed away in bank."

"Only a hundred dollars or so."

"You dress well."

"I'm careful. This is the fifth winter for this overcoat. I haven't bought a suit in three years."

"Oh, you'll find a job. I've had three in a year, but none of them amounted to much, and I'm sheddin' no tears; though I'm in debt all around."

"You can't owe any one who needs money more than I do. Elizabeth and the children have got down to eating meat only once in two days. I've pawned

all my personal effects except the clothes I have on, and they're my capital in applying for a new place."

"I'm sorry, Jack, but I ain't got no money. When I get a little ahead, I'll pay you something."

"Don't lie."

"What?"

"Don't lie. You've got fifty dollars in that vest pocket where your thumb is."

"Jack, if you wasn't my cousin, I'd break your face. I'll have nothing more to do with you. Get out! If you come to my place to bother me again I'll throw you down stairs. Not much capital will you have then for a situation."

William swaggered off up stairs. Anna met him.

"Is Jack gone?" she asked.

"Yes."

"You got that election money, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"You didn't give none to Jack, did you?"

"No."

"Glad you kept your senses about you? I've got my eye on some bargains at Brown's for me and the children. And to-night let's go to the variety show."

"All right. The grocer can whistle for his money. Jack, poor sheep, I half pity him."

John, meantime, with a heavy heart, was slowly tramping homeward.

What more commonplace story can be told than that of borrowing, spending, saving, jangling, planning, starving, paying one's way and beating one's way, while fighting the wolf from the door?

The Foes of the Pioneer.

I.—PARASITES.

Dakota, April, 1887.—I am owner and all-round editor of a weekly newspaper published in a railroad town in this territory. As news collector, I come in contact with everybody in the locality. As exchange reader, I have this northwestern country under my eye. As chief editor, I write, or scissor, public opinion. Hence I am passably well qualified to speak of men and things in this region. I know the personal history and business status of every man in town. I know the drift of territorial affairs—social, political, and financial. From my vantage point I see important facts as they are. In these occasional notes I promise to be candid with myself.

First, then, as to myself. I know how to nurse my business. I work the happy vein of speaking well of my advertisers; while the business men who do not advertise with me I never mention. I can draw up a paid notice to read like real reading. I make up my paper with the best paying matter to the front. I gracefully yield space to politicians of my own party. As owner-editor I manufacture for profit a partisan newspaper—a commodity.

In the present period of my career, my paper flatters many and offends few. Its local department is long-drawn-out blandishment. Its editorial page is sustained optimism. I am a Democrat. I habitually hint at Jeffersonian principles, but I rarely quote them literally, or seriously advocate their practice. I arraign the local wing of the enemy as a whole, but avoid naming opponents in particular. I invariably advocate reform, but recognize the difficulties in reducing theory to practice. I demand good candidates for office, and expect the successful ones to be good to my paper. My political pen sweeps easily through the distant and nebulous, but it rarely grates against the nigh and concrete.

There is another newspaper in town. Necessarily, it supports the other party. Its editor is a sensible man. He knows wherein to agree with me and wherein to differ. We agree to divide the court-house printing, to maintain the same job rates, to issue papers of one size, and to charge by the same scale for advertising. Our enterprise is about equal. We both paraphrase opinion and sentiment from our respective leading party organs and we frugally fill up our forms with stereotype plates. We divide literary honors. My rival editor prints church news in full, is an amateur of poetry, and cultivates choice expressions; but I work up sensations and write slang if it cuts a corner. My rival for good society; I for the crowd. We have pooled the journalism of our community.

I have besides a tacit understanding with my rival.

He is my political target; I am his. I hold him up before the town as the hateful embodiment of the Republican party—of its hypocrisy, its degeneracy, its tendency to imperial centralization. He heaps on me the vituperation that Republicans keep in stock for Democrats; and as a result good little Republican boys and dear old Mugwump ladies look upon me as a perverse leader of the lost. Our innocent readers do not know that my rival and I and the devil are only playing with them.

My rival and I print much local news and brew news from every happening. If a tire runs off a wheel in the street we make a "story" of the circumstance, with the names of the driver, his employer, the bystanders, and the people of the neighborhood—if they are among our friends or advertisers. But we print the name of the wagon-maker and hint at his work as deficient—if he doesn't advertise. This principle glitters like a gem in all our work.

Thus the seasons come and go. We move along with them, we two editors, wearing thin goods in summer and overcoats in winter. We adapt ourselves to conditions as we find them. We make believe that all society, all law, all custom, and all convention are well enough if people will but conform to them.

But there are seas beneath the seas. Not by skimming the surface may men know the lower depths. Sometimes I amuse myself by creating in fancy a genuine deep water newspaper—one that would reach clear down to social truth. What a glorious opportunity lies open in this Western country for the editor

who would print bottom facts as they are! The facts are easily accessible, but the newspaper that would utter them would be—well, at the furthest extreme from mine. The record of the profitable games worked in our town would fill a daily newspaper, the little tricks of my rival editor and myself hardly deserving in it more than a ten-line paragraph.

In essaying some mention of men and things that might be chronicled in a truthful newspaper, I will be fair and again speak first of myself. For two years after I settled in this town, I worked indefatigably with my coat off. I had brought West with me from my good old father's Connecticut farmsome quotations from Poor Richard and some prepossession for square dealing, with certain rules of conduct formed on the code observed by the steady class in my native town. I had learned typesetting and read up in politics to fit myself to be editor; and I worked in my printing office in every capacity up to the limit of my powers. Withal, I looked forward to earning modest money at honest work, to accumulating gradually through economy, and to gaining influence and, in time, perhaps honor and fortune. My impulses were to speak the truth and promote wholesome sentiment; my expectations to attract praise and profit from an appreciative community. As I have said, I remained slave to these delusions for about two years. During that period, my setting type, my keeping books, my ceaseless labors indoors failed to win me profits or power outside; but my candid editorials and conscientious

local page made me whatever powerful enemies I have to-day.

One morning I awoke to recognize certain illuminating facts. Putting literary effort into local items is throwing time away. Straining for truth carries one beyond his party and may give offense to the successful. The few may want high-class journalism; the average of men assimilate coarse mental food. Politics is a professional sport in which you back your friends that they may back you. Business is a game in which the devil takes those caught napping. Manual work is for men who can't manage. Foresight is putting up legal jobs on others. These secrets had been hinted to me early in my career by a friendly newspaper man, but it then had seemed to me that my informant was superficial, prone to suspect evil, and unendowed with the higher traits. Discrediting him, I went in for my own experience and bought it with costly time.

The day I awoke to the intimations of my own mind I grew wide awake suddenly. I saw facts as facts. While I had been pruning my style, my rival had captured the patronage of the city council. While my editorial page had been preaching public spirit, I had been offending good advertisers. While I had barely paid my notes by my ceaseless labors, the owner of my printing office lot had made two thousand dollars through its increase in value. While I had been economizing in print paper and type, these materials had advanced in price through pool freight rates and trust production. While I had gone to

work daily by the factory whistle, scores of my fellow townsmen with little brains or character had managed to loaf through short hours in offices and make money. I ran over in my mind the smart fellows about town who were getting rich, or trying to, by not working. It was a long list.

One good pregnant revelation is enough for me. I saw the sea beneath the surface sea. At once there was in my mind a crumbling of proverbs, traditions, and predilections that led to work—for me. Straightway I washed my hands clean of all marks of toil. I put on my coat and kept it on. I hired cheap men to do badly the work I had done well. I began sitting around in good clothes, with an eye on chances.

I soon passed from little ventures to big. Three years ago I made a trip through an unsettled part of this Territory, prospecting. I went with an officeholder who had a tip on a projected railroad line. He and I guessed where a townsite might be needed on the road, and at that point we soon afterward took up several hundred acres of public land—our methods cheap, convenient and sufficiently legal. To-day the new railroad is in operation, and a small town is built on our tract. We yet own a quarter of it, the railroad managers giving us a station only on terms that amounted to robbery. I have a little plate newspaper running in the infant town. It booms my real estate. It booms other men's real estate, if they divide fairly with me. As this admission shows, I have acquired the true business spirit.

Since the day I made the startling but profitable

discovery that I was losing by working, I have looked out upon Dakota as from a philosopher's window. My code of ethics has been changed. Why should a man live after his forefathers' ways once he has caught nineteenth century ideas? If loafing pays and working fails to pay, who but a fool will not loaf if he can? This the atmosphere in which I now live.

Above the world of honest and fat-witted toilers is a world of good fellows with nimble wits—schemers, gamblers on human nature and in the necessities of life. Would you know some of them? Into whose possession have gone the illegal land entries of Dakota—80 per cent. of all? The toilers'? Hardly. And the great railroad lines that streak the map of this western country—are they held by the settlers for their own use and benefit? Not so? The small farmers, the workers, the majority of its inhabitants, do not run Dakota. Railroad kings, eastern bankers, cattle barons, townsite gamblers, bonanza farmers, eastern mortgage holders, vacant land grabbers, politicians—these run Dakota.

Yes; the taxing powers run Dakota. The private, not the public taxing powers. First is the railroad. A creature of government through subsidies, it is a colossal vampire, sucking the life-blood from many a community. Another is the trust. A creature of government, through the tariff, the trust increases the price of nearly all that the farmers wear and use. Another is the money lender. Protected by government, through exclusive banking laws, he gets eight per cent. where justice might give him four. But

the strongest taxing power is the one that seizes on the virgin land itself wherever it shows value or the possibility of value. Creatures of government, through title without use, forestallers reach far out over the wild prairies and compel the coming working settler to pay them tribute.

A thousand patient pioneers may, through rough labor, acquire title under the Federal land laws to two hundred thousand acres. The homestead of each may equal in value perhaps a side street acre in a town or a single plot in a city. Hint to one of these pioneers that the value of land is a just object for a heavy tax, and, beholding the phantom of a condition worse than his present, he would be seized with paroxysms of terror. But should a syndicate of millionaires purchase two hundred thousand acres of vacant land in Dakota, the poor farmer would look upon the transaction as grand financiering. He could not see that in time it would help shut his own children off the soil. Nor that he and his fellow pioneers would in future stand small beside the syndicate in the eye of the legislature, the railroad companies, the bench, the press, and the pulpit. Nor that, with increased taxes of land values, he might escape the heavy cuts into his earnings now made through unfair taxes. Nor that the unused land in private possession all about him signifies deprivation alike for city worker and hired farmhand.

Who are taking the profits of Dakota lands? In this year of our Lord, dealing in land is carried on scientifically. So-called improvement companies em-

ploy hungry lawyers in every county to report the slightest promise of "an improved local real estate market." At the signal of these agents the great land-sharks come to gobble the meal awaiting them. Yelping little newspapers bark "Boom! Boom!" Men with a scrap of capital go money mad. And then begins a game of chance—lottery, skin-faro, stock market, church-fair grab game, all in one—encouraged by the law. Values for ten years to come are discounted. Rather a safe game this for big capital, since land values rarely go down with a rush. The echoes of a boom linger after the wary know the boom is dead. But woe in the end to the droves of lambkins.

An aristocracy is forming in this new country. To him who will read, how plain, even now, the existence of our Dakota upper class. Here in our own town the simplest descriptive terms have taken on the semblance of caste. "Up town" and "across town" indicate more than direction and locality. Let a kid-gloved young woman here use these words, and instantly you perceive that in her society vocabulary "up town" signifies wealth and "across town" not wealth. "Up town" is sweet, clean, charming; "across town" is a lower-class Ghetto in which all human conglomeration finds lodgment. "Up town" is a pleasant stretch of villas with well kept grounds, indicative of tastes indulged in and bountiful tables often spread, and material conditions in general in which desires may be satisfied. "Across town" is a region of weather-worn frame structures, bare yards, broken down

fences, the quarter for every necessary public nuisance—gas-works, slaughter-houses, scavengers' laboratories; it is the poor man's swarming spot; it shelters the trash that crowds dirty boarding houses; it takes in poorly-dressed adventurous womankind; it welcomes ignoble card-table speculators.

In my capacity as everybody's newspaper acquaintance, I lately had interviews with two across-town men. One was a wage-worker. He said that when the whistles blew for work before daylight the only people astir were across-town folks; that when anything up town was to be built or repaired or in any way produced, it was done by across-town folks; that when booms were on, those who got out of them just what they got out of life before—a living—were the across-town folks. He remarked that "across town" polled just three times as many votes as "up town."

The other man I interviewed wore expensive clothes and sported gold jewelry. In popular belief, he sews up bank-notes in his coat-lining; for he may at any time have to leave town on an hour's notice, being of the sporting talent. He talked in a dejected way. He was sorry to be known as a gambler. He intended as soon as possible to rise above the disreputable grades of betting—whenever his increasing pile would permit him to go into real property, a pool, or stock trading. Work? Not much. He had a mind above work. His tastes were for what pays better than work. Work? Not in this age of enterprise, progress, opportunity for grit and grand possibilities in legitimate speculation.

II. CREEPERS.

Dakota, June, 1887.—Since my last writing I have stolen a march on my rival, the Republican editor. I have started a daily paper. He is left in the lurch with his weekly. He has reproached me, of course, charging me with violating our agreement (as gentlemen) that we divide the loaves and fishes of our city journalism. My answer? It was that our understanding related simply to what was, and not to what was to be. This I deemed a sufficient smart business man's answer. It bore semblance to a justification. I knew that no explanation would satisfy my rival; I justified myself and furnished an alleged fact wherewith to prime my friends—the worthy citizens whose interest it is to side with me. But he was only playing virtuous. I had been told that he contemplated the very move I made, and I anticipated him in the nick of time.

The sweet public has no fault to find with me. It is showering congratulations on me. The honest people of our city have been taught to praise the trickster, in law, in business, in politics, as long as he is not in jail. My rival, having certain points of a gentleman, is now printing in his back-number weekly complimentary mention of my energy, together with notice of his intention soon to start the largest daily in our part of Dakota. And in his sanctum he is bottling his wrath and mixing the gall and wormwood that in due time he will administer to me.

I, too, have a sanctum of my own. The "Daily

State Glory" must needs have a sanctum. It is a little corner room, from which I look out on Main street at one window, and on Prairie avenue at another. Glass partitions separate it from the other rooms of the floor. By wheeling about on my revolving chair at my desk, I can overlook the composing and press rooms, while without turning I can glance into both the counting room and the editorial room. Thus I secure from all hands the service rendered the master.

In the editorial room are two working journalists. The lesser of these lights is a stripling whose salary is not to be mentioned. He gathers local items and calls himself city editor. He classifies his paragraphs as "Court Cutlets," "Police Points," "Town Topics," and "Sporting Spatterings," and thinks his alliteration literature. But he is imbued with the spirit of our paper. He tickles "our enterprising fellow-citizen, Mr. Push, who is erecting a new front gate;" rhapsodizes over the music of "Professor Tinkle, leader of the city orchestra," who, with his artists is rehearsing "The Cowboy Dude;" and bestows his choicest phrases on "Miss Nellie Osborne, queen of the varieties." Shakespeare has told him he may put on praise with a trowel.

Our other journalist takes to himself the title of managing editor. His duties are manifold and important. Me he speaks of solemnly as "the chief," and he deems it fit that I should but hold the tiller of our ship while he supplies sail and wind. He does his chosen part well. Knowing just what a political

editorial should be, he supplies the paper day by day with platitudinous expression of Democratic prejudice. He has seized the subtleties in the art of non-committal wordiness. He can accurately describe every phase of a political situation, hint at the reforms demanded by a conscientious public, and in the end swing his readers safely back upon the meaningless old party platform. He glories in controversy. This he runs by rule. From a Republican newspaper he will take an article, garble its statements, misrepresent its meaning, distort its spirit, and then triumphantly demolish his "unfair opponent" and throw his party into deserved disorder. Our managing editor is a trained editor.

My new daily none too strong in the exchequer, our managing editor does also the heavy reporting. He is a reporter by instinct. I never gave him a hint of my policy in words; he saw one copy of my paper and knew it and me. He is perfectly aware that precisely as language was invented to conceal thought, so certain daily newspapers are printed to suppress the news. He can dilate on half-truth and leave full truth unsaid, omit all mention of the significant and spin out columns of the trivial—if this accords with the policy of our paper.

An example or two.

There is a land boom in town. Our reporting-managing editor revels in promoting, glorifying and pretending to guide the boom. He prints every point concerning all real estate sales. His pen sputters wildly as he dashes off boom articles. He every

morning blares in great headlines yesterday's advances in values. He has copious encouragement for the rising financier, or keen observer, or shrewd speculator (his pet phrases), who clears hundreds on a city plot. He tries to forecast how far the boom can safely go, and places its limit at what values may really be in twenty years with a quadrupled population. To fan the boom flame he stops men in the street and loudly asks questions, or gives points in whispers. He it is who knows all about the plans of this or that clique of boomers. Curiously enough, with all his bustle, he is not making a cent by the boom. He is without capital. His meagre salary mostly goes to maintain his numerous progeny. His only perquisites are courtesies in cigars and liquids, proffered by chaps who want business notices free. But, in common with our whole community, he is burning in every fibre with boom fever.

Have you ever stood in the crowd packed about a gaming table and watched the play? The chances are that you then enriched your character (if not your purse) and added to your knowledge. A gambling game itself is usually childish. The interest centers in results, not in skill. It is anticipation that agitates players and observers. The dealer, who knows all the chances, and is but a hired worker, is cool—and he alone. A player turns hot and cold; he has nervous shocks—tremors of fear and flashes of hope. In the betting circle all have the look of hunted animals. Commonly a master player is pursuing a desperate game. He plunges to the limits. Others second his

every venture or bet steadily against him. So the play goes. Look at the gamesters closely. Some perspire, some suddenly turn pale, some visibly tremble, some cannot command their speech. Could you know how each one felt, what a revelation of palpitating hearts, of nerves overstrung, of brain and body in shooting pains, as if cut by sharp instruments! Talk is in undertones—comment, suggestion, profanity. And it is the men in the outer ring, the lookers on, who betray the greatest excitement, the evidently poor devil whose possible winnings could hardly keep him in bread being the most wrought-up of all.

In a betting-circle frenzy is our whole town to-day. Man, woman, and child, each is talking, thinking, dreaming boom. When our paper comes out in the morning, its glowing reports of real estate sales and prophecies of better things to come are greedily devoured by an anxious public. Who has won? Who has proved his business talent? Who is a move further away from poverty? Who now in position to take wealth without work! In the front rank of the speculators are a lucky few. To the larger groups with lesser capital only fragments fall. Yet who does not talk and have boom craze as if all the town benefited by equal shares? Hundreds who have not and never will have standing room of their own on earth are parched with boom fever to their very bones.

In the thick of the boom, quickening men's avarice, firing their imagination, and blunting their ideas of justice, is our managing editor. Does he know what he is doing? Has he an inkling of the truth? Is

he aware that every dollar added to the price of a vacant lot is a dollar more on the mortgage of labor? As I look out of my office window into Main street I see more lots vacant than improved. Vacant lot No. 210 is owned by a city speculator; No. 212 by an absentee capitalist. To the "sub" in our composing room, who has just brought his family to town, what matters it who owns either? That sub is not of, but only in, our community; and speculation is shunting him further and further from its land every week. Gambling in the first necessary of life is pushing him and many another working fellow-citizen to the back streets "across town." But these are truths not told by our managing editor, at least not in my paper.

But sometimes a spark of truth flashes from our editor's pen or falls from his snipping scissors. A few days ago he clipped from a Dakota exchange a paragraph that indicated some advance in his mind as to the principles of property. Foreigners, the paragraph read, should not be allowed to own Dakota land: they bought no goods of its merchants. The first crude perception here of the broad principle that land should be held only on use, how long will it be before that principle takes root with those who work on Dakota's broad prairies?

Primary elections were held last night in the three precincts of our town. My managing editor reported all. In his accounts he tickled the speechmakers, the inspectors, and the nominees, and summarized the votes. Nothing more. That was all the public wanted. I attended those primaries and saw more.

I saw that in every case the successful nominees had been the choice beforehand of a boss caucus. The caucus ballots were at hand printed; the rival tickets, favored by certain earnest citizens, had to be written. The caucus supporters were roughs under pay, thoughtless youngsters, and small-bore politicians; the voters in favor of the citizens' ticket were sober men reluctantly taking an hour from their firesides for the public good.

The city and county ticket of our party—the caucus ticket—is consequently before the public. I can begin at the top and go to the bottom of it, and designate the influence behind every candidate's name. I can tell the assessment each candidate will pay. Touched up spicily in print, the wire pulling, the bargaining, the work behind the curtain, the sharp practice at the primaries, might for a moment give our townspeople reason to turn aside from the boom. It would throw some pure and lofty candidates into political ague, and relieve their boom fever. But this is news not to be printed by our managing editor.

By the way, he made a speech at one of the primaries. He was called upon to render tribute to our free institutions as exemplified on the occasion. It was a good speech. It met the requirements of the crowd and of the hour—sounding well and signifying naught. I can recall one of his sonorous sentences: "Our magic city is feeling the embrace of the iron armed railroad, which, penetrating the howling wilderness a few years ago, has opened up new avenues of trade and transportation, carrying the providential blessings

of our higher civilization far away beyond the crowded cities of the eastern seaboard and on, on, westward until the green Alleghanies are linked with the cloud-capped Sierras, those noble mountains whose sky-piercing summits are reflected in the broad bosom of the pellucid Pacific."

And, my own managing editor, something more has been brought here from the long settled East. Close in the wake of man moving toward the setting sun, veiled in a mist of the law's origin, comes the spectre whose features are the portent of want and misery. It is Injustice, following ever the subjection of nature by the hardy pioneer. Its coming is hastened by speech-makers who help to debauch primaries, by boom criers, by writers who befog unsophisticated minds and trifle with fundamental morality. Dakota's crops last year were bad, but Dakota land values increased twenty million dollars. And millions of its acres, unused, were fenced in. By that much was the black shadow of the poverty spectre then spread over Dakota.

To-day, our managing editor asked me a favor. He wants friendly notice of half a dozen Dakota journalists to "go in." Well, it shall all go in. Then some time will these writers send him type-honey in turn. Little else have they to give, poor scribblers. Of those to whom he deals out the treacle, four are quitting the Territory disappointed, while two will "assume the journalistic tripod" when another job turns up. Into the wherefores of these flittings let us not look too closely. But we may ask why, whereas penmen are ever raising the hymn of praise for Da-

kota, Dakota enriches them not, but freely lets their nimble pencils go to other fields. Is it, brief and blunt, because talk is cheap, because falsifiers are a drug in the market, because the humbug badge of "journalist" may be pinned on any ink-fingered manikin that will sacrifice his own honest sentiments to please a master and divert the infantile public mind?

Yet, our managing editor works hard to earn bread for his bairns. What fault of his if he toils in a field of tares? Somewhere must he harvest what he can. There he sits now, beyond the glass partition. He looks fifty; is more than forty. Short, swarthy, stout, bull-necked. His hair thick and sandy; his face beardless and harsh-featured. Hard of eye, solid of cheek, aggressive of manner. Pushing, striving, shrewd, impetuous. Well, he is but a man. Convinced that breadwinning is his duty, he sees not too much. Why should he try to tear away the curtain from social shams? Does society, does anybody, want the full revelation? He knows how thick is the wall between sham and truth. Rather a light weight he, to try break it through. He might go to pieces—the wall none the weaker, society none the purer.

III. MILDEW.

Dakota, July, 1887.—Our city has had its Fourth of July. It was an old-fashioned Fourth. In the morning our military and firemen, with our civic societies, paraded the streets, and in the afternoon a public mass-meeting was held in the meadow on Wolf Creek. The parade was kaleidoscopic. At the

mass-meeting, prominent citizens graced the platform, orators expatiated on the virtues of the eagle, and a young lady elocutionist rolled the r's of the revered declaration. In the evening the pyrotechnic wonders imagined beforehand by our expectant youngsters were surpassed by the fireworks from Chicago.

But the most brilliant feature of the celebration was the account of it in my paper on the 5th. I Barnumized the programme from beginning to end. The soldiers marched like veterans, every one of them a Murat; the firemen were gallant, athletic, alert, determined, the favored of the fair; the orators had exhibited powers unlooked-for, and long would memory treasure their inspired thoughts; our sages of the platform, wise and potent in bearing, were civic models; and sweet was the soprano of the young lady elocutionist.

Yes; as colorist and inflator, my new daily performed its whole duty. So far as I know, my method was seen through by only one person, a worldly-minded minister of the gospel. He's my confidential friend. We had seen the Fourth together. On the speaker's stand he had made the prayer and I had apotheosized the pioneer. But on the afternoon of the 5th he dropped in at my sanctum, took a chair by my side, looked at me with cynic eyes, and read me from heading to tail-dash my poetic description of the doings on the Fourth. Then he laughed, not the long and loud laugh of the simple, but the good-humored and contemptuous laugh of the wise. He made no remarks. No need to say anything. His

well-put emphasis at certain passages had said everything. As he unctuously intoned my sounding panegyric, did not my every garish word signify its barren opposite? Did I not see the celebration as it actually was, in its extravagance of conception and its poverty of execution? And did I not recall sundry diverting comments he and I had exchanged anent the parade on our drive in the procession to the meadow? No need now to remind me that we had seen the Major in gay regimentals as a barn-yard cock—strut, feathers, and crow; that we had counted but three full uniforms in the awkward squad of thirty; that to us the firemen were rowdies; that our talk ran on the proneness of men to mistake aspiration for performance. In reading my list of distinguished citizens present, my friend let his voice distribute to the deserving scorn, contempt, and ridicule. He knows our honest city fathers as well as I know them.

But my readers will find no fault with my hurrah over this Fourth. Men crave the ideal. Regarding themselves, they never see the actual. Each imagines himself, if not absolutely good, as good as his neighbor. In its own estimate each town has features or qualities unparalleled. Observe the stirring effect on the bumpkin of Shakespeare's "Caesar" mouthed by a skeleton company of barnstormers. The same was the effect of our home Fourth on our patriotic townsmen. They saw, not what it was, but the glories it stood for in their fancy.

There was my speech on "The Pioneer." I constructed it knowing that my hearers wanted poetry,

not prose. Plain facts they would have hated worse than horse medicine. On that national July day the much-mixed company confronting me anticipated, and got, glitteringly general commonplace. It looked for, and I gave it, the familiar western word-panorama—prairies, mountains, forests, mines. I threw in stories of the favorite western monumental characters—the indomitable Kit Carson, the picturesque Sam Houston, the romantic Custer, the gentle Father De Smet, the audacious Fremont, the dashing Daniel Boone, the lucky Buffalo Bill, and of the Argonauts of '49 and the great Grangers of to-day. In the transcendent beings whose glories I chanted every man who heard me saw his possible self. All shared for the hour the god-like qualities of my great men. Each felt himself a hero fitted to play in lofty drama; each was an instrument that might assist in heavenly harmonies if only placed aright in its proper orchestra.

So it is that my paper is daily packed with encomium. So it is, too, that my "Pioneer" was expansively laudatory and my report of the Fourth a sustained apostrophe to the goddess of liberty, with sweet sops by the barrel to the gullible public.

Small thanks to me had I dissected the pioneer in the light of cold fact. What an outrage had I depicted the specimens truthfully that faced me as I spoke!

The Pioneer? There are chiefly two classes. In the first are those who come West to work. In the second, those who come to keep the others at work.

Dakota is owned mainly by the pioneer of the second class. He is banker, railroad manager, mine

operator, real estate speculator, politician, lawyer, editor. He is a bull in the market; to him the financial skies are always bright, and for him the horoscope of Dakota has predicted a hopeful future. It befits him to sing loud the dignity of the other pioneer, who does the work; for immigrants, in many ways, bring him fortune. His blandishments serve to keep the worker contented. Meantime, forever raising the barrier of higher prices for land, and by law creating other discouragements to labor, he proudly proclaims himself the architect of Dakota's future.

The other kind—ah; the genuine pioneer! Far away from these bleak plains he planned a home of his own. Painfully, with a self-denial almost superhuman he accumulated means sufficient to bring him here. This land was strange to him, its manners semi-barbarous, its climate disheartening. He came, passing on the way thousands of untilled acres, forestalled by the other class of pioneers, and at last he took for himself a contracted quarter section. He built on it an adobe cabin of two small rooms. His dinner table was a packing box. For chairs he knocked together rough bits of board. His tableware was of cheap tin and iron. Until a crop came he and his family subsisted on pork and corn-meal. To break the soil, fence his land, and put up a stable was endless labor! His lonely wife viewed the dreary, woodless landscape through her tears. How she feared sickness to the little ones—it was so far to a doctor. There were no neighbors; a passing tramp was a welcome visitor. Other settlers might have

been near, but so much land was held idle by speculators. The clothing of this pioneer and his family was as uncouth as their fare was coarse. He went about in a blue flannel shirt, rusty brown jean trousers, heavy brogans and an old broad-rim felt hat. His wife dressed in brown prints, and the children, barefoot, were in his old clothes or hers cut down. His work was a dull, lonesome round, its products meagre; hers monotonous housework, seldom relieved by the call of a friendly neighbor. What few objects of refinement stood in their cabin but reminded them of civilized life and intensified their privations.

This pioneer encountered sickness, hunger, wild beasts, and at times hostile Indians. Often his heart died away within him as he surveyed his "land of promise" and saw in it only remote hope. No fuel, no water, poor grass! He found no home market for his produce. His own labor at hire was not in paying demand. How short his first crops; how low their prices! Wheat was always going down; milk had no sale; butter went at a few cents a pound; live stock paid little more than its freight to far-off Chicago. But the coal bought at the railroad station was twice its cost in the East, and canned goods and dried fruit treble. "Three cents for one needle!" exclaimed a pioneer's wife, speaking to a storekeeper; "why, back home ten cents'll buy fifty needles." "But," was the reply, "consider the freight!"

Not infrequently a third of the pioneer's time went in hauling water. If he mortgaged his land, he fell into a trap; the banks charged him one per cent. a

month. Some farmers obtained what loans they could, abandoned their lands, and quit the country. Then their deserted fields lay unused, the mortgagees waiting for the increase in value to come with time—and more working pioneers.

Few were the relations of the pioneer with society and government. He voted, paid taxes, took a weekly newspaper, and once in a season went to church. To cast his vote he rode horseback twenty miles. He voted for the party ticket that he inherited from his fathers and for the local candidates who promised most for the farmer. He found much difficulty out on the ocean-like plains in keeping the run of politics. His county newspaper was little more than an advertising sheet for town merchants. The masterful men of the mercantile and political world it puffed weekly were his objects of emulation, if not envy. As to taxes, the pioneer's mind was not wholly clear. He liked a tax on mortgages, it being fair that government should take tithe from Shylock's pound of flesh. He wanted protection against all foreign goods. He was willing the nearest town should tax commercial travelers, for they injured the home merchant, who bought the farmer's produce. He believed it only natural and just that the taxes on his farm should be higher than the taxes on the vacant land about him, which was unproductive;—he would himself get another "claim" as soon as possible and hold it vacant for a rise in value. Meantime, he was willing to work. In this last particular, at least, he held partly correct views.

If you were to explain to this pioneer to-day—now

by his labors comfortably housed—that the grab-land-and-hold-it system of settling a new country is barbarous, he would fail to understand you. If you told him his work-day was too long by half, he would think you were gibing at him. If you tried to correct his views on taxation, he could not follow you. If you preached against the other class of pioneers, which exploits his kind, he would wish in his heart that he was of them. If you advised him to put forth his views through his home paper, he would plead lack of time and inability to write for print. If you unfolded a system of direct voting on the laws, he would ask if the town workingmen were not too ignorant to practice it, but would never doubt himself. If you asserted that the farmer and the town artisan mainly supported society, he would deem you a crank. If you proceeded to discriminate between land and all other forms of property, between the earth and its man-made products, he would quote against you his friends, the lawyers. And, saddest of all, if he should ever turn social reformer, he would surely first clutch at a fool's panacea and proscribe any who would teach him better.

Oh, no; none of these new-fangled notions for the working pioneer. He wants good interest on his own money; is willing to pick up a few watered railroad shares cheap; will accept any privilege the law accords any one else; expects laboring men to work for him at his price; and he has a few extra unused acres that he hopes to sell by and by for ten times what they cost him. He looks forward to the day when he may

be among the non-working pioneers. To his mind, success means figuring among the men of wealth written up in fake newspapers and glorified on the Fourth.

IV. BLIGHT.

San Francisco, September, 1887.—I heard of the great California land boom. It made me tired of fooling with my petty interests in Dakota. I am here for a million.

For several years the far-seeing have said that real estate in southern California was cheap for its returns. Last spring this opinion prevailed with wide-awake speculators throughout the State. The boom started at Los Angeles and soon flourished there. In a brief while it had spread to Santa Ana, Anaheim, and San Diego. Then it moved north to Santa Barbara, and going on, creating paper towns, in time it wakened up San Jose. This old town, whose property owners were mostly residents for a generation, soon counted its scores of transfers weekly. Next it was asked why livelier places further north should not try the game. And soon Oakland was at it, and San Francisco itself. While Oakland is subdividing its swamps San Francisco is staking off its sand dunes.

The boom epidemic has penetrated almost every county of the vast State. Wherever men meet to converse—on the street, in the cars, in hotel lobbies, by the home fireside—the topic uppermost is the boom. Every class is affected. The sporting fraternity, to whom the boom is professional play, find their ranks

swollen by citizens of all grades. The thrifty working people see in it a chance to risk their all for fortune's smile—possibly the only chance they shall ever have. Business men are putting out more "paper," to go into real estate. The experienced are calculating on the turn of the tide.

The press is performing noble service in speeding the boom. All the daily newspapers are running boom departments, with great spread headings and detailed reports for every scene of activity. Here is the "Call" publishing in a single issue special boom telegrams from San Jose, Sausalito, Los Gatos, Hollister, Livermore, San Buenaventura, Gilroy, Santa Barbara, Sacramento, Willows, Oroville, and Santa Rosa. At all these points booms are raging. What phraseological gems come from the correspondents to glitter in metropolitan pages! "More sales this week than in all last year;" "our city full of strangers;" "Eastern capitalists on the way representing two million dollars;" "the syndicate regards our town as inferior to none on the Coast for investment;" "rumor says that a large hotel is to be built here at once;" "work is begun on the site for a new town;" "an electric road to the beach is talked of;" "city lots going at marvelously increased rates;" "land doubled in price in four weeks." The "Examiner" the other day issued a twenty-eight page edition, almost entirely boom matter. Six columns were taken up with advertisements from one firm. Every page had illustrations of men and places connected with the boom. Column after column was devoted to the "conservative pioneers"

who never sold until their ranches brought town-lot prices; to the "wide awake real estate firms" who cut up these ranches into town lots; to the "enterprising business men" who advanced "margins" on the lots, to sell a month later at fifty per cent. profit; to the "Eastern capitalists" who are expected to improve the property. And finally a brief word regarding the working man who, to complete the scheme, must come and apply his labor on the boom-inflated land.

To the unspeculative eye some of the "Examiner's" pictures convey ideas not intended. Here is Cahuenga. Cahuenga gets four illustrations. However, it is as yet only a town on paper. A syndicate is to lay it out, build a railroad to it, provide it with industries, and erect a hotel for it on an eminence commanding a fine view. The reader in his sober senses who looks on paper Cahuenga would steer clear of it yet awhile. Another city of the future is Long Beach, "the undisputed Newport of Southern California." A bird's-eye view shows Long Beach as a bare plain which the map-maker has cut up into city squares, but as a fact it still harbors the undisturbed horned toad and is the growing place of wild cacti. Nor is the "Examiner" alone in its unreal pictures of real estate. Boom pamphlets, strewn about everywhere, give city names to a few straggling frame houses lost in a rough country. Yet men feverishly invest their dollars in the brilliant future of places that are but names.

Yes, yes! Once more has California gone money mad. The present season of insanity has produced

hordes of boom promoters whose chief capital is talk. They offer us unstaked lots to the music of brass bands, with free rides to view if we may perchance buy; and they tell us a hundred stories of men snatched from poverty to be set up as princes over rent-compelling piles of dirt. "Come!" they cry, "stake your money on the product to be turned out by working capital and working men yet to be put to work!" Nine-tenths of all the sales recorded are from speculators and accomplices to other speculators and accomplices. Meantime there is a glut of labor in the market.

However, I bow to the necessity of self-preservation. I can't abandon my business to settle social questions. The wrongs of this world are far too many for me to set right. I may be sorry for the workers, but I must take care of myself. Just now I am busy selecting the most likely locality for well-paying investments. I care nothing for any form of industry. To me California is simply a broad green gambler's table. On what spot shall I bet my money?

V. ARE THERE REMEDIES?

San Francisco, May, 1888.—For a year I have not felt like writing anything in this private note book. What I have now to say I shall put briefly.

Having chosen my spot for investment, I went in on a large scale and mortgaged heavily. To raise money I disposed of all my Dakota property. I reckoned on waiting for the culmination in values and at the first sign of a fall selling. But it happened

that when I joined the boom the swell was at its crest, and the only turn that came was a slump. It left the market thirty to forty per cent. off. Of my newly acquired lands all I had left was the mortgages. My capital was wiped out. I—well, that was the end.

I fell far down. I had to go to work. I found a job at my trade.

Working at my trade. Applying for leave to labor; competing with men who wanted work even more than I; obeying the rough orders of strangers; paid per week about what I had before spent in a day; saving pennies, wearing clothes threadbare, going to bed tired and nervous; in fear of sickness and poverty, dreading old age in penury; seeing my wife working hard; unable to provide as I would for my children.

Plunged down to the base of society. In the swarm; crowded; shoved about; not too clean. In constant contact with coarseness, noise, rudeness, beset with the small vexations which chafe; hobbled with the chains that keep poor men restricted to scant pickings.

Yet all around the working people lie rich pastures. I find a few of my fellow-poor talking of getting at them. Some would organize regiments of industry; swear in; drill; officer by merit marks; plowing, sowing, reaping on orders; distributing products by needs;—enslaving all to a social Frankenstein. Some would go into labor politics, with what aim beyond capturing offices a remote question. Some would wage relentless war against employers. Some would obliterate law.

And, amid the clamor, what notes of heroic truth I at times hear. Among the walking delegates there are martyrs; of the bench-bent toilers, many are philosophers; in the masses I find what is best in loyalty, honesty, and aspirations for justice.

What singular enlightenment is afforded one by the right point of view! To illustrate: You are a stranger in a great city, the narrow streets of which are a maze. Sometimes you are hours threading your way hither and thither, seeking what when setting out you thought close at hand. You can discover no plan in the place; can fix upon no landmark to hold to your bearings; you can but walk on, amid the crowds, taking deceptive turns, exploring blind alleys and guessing the way at every corner. Nowhere in the streets can you obtain a view of the whole city; nothing more than the individual features of narrow confines. But at last you come upon a high tower, you mount it and from that lofty observatory look down over all the city and even off into the country beyond. Instantly your street puzzles are solved; out of the maze comes the plan; your wished-for landmarks stand up to give you future guidance. You look down on the crowds in the streets as a being behind a cloud might look down on the world.

From my observation tower in Dakota, when I was a speculator there, I saw down into the twists and turns of our social system. Then ordinary working men seemed to me mere ants. I saw how and why their horizon was limited, how walls of their own making hemmed them in, and how there is no inextricable

maze in society's city once a commanding view is obtained.

Down, jostling, elbowing, pushing in the crowd, I sometimes tell confused men to go up in the tower of thought and see their way out of the labyrinths they live in. Most of them refuse; they will not even try. By nature they are incurious, or satisfied, or servile; or they doubt me; or they believe that because they know the city's alleyways they know all the world. Some, in flocks, employ professional guides to act as their guardians. These advise the crowds to keep in order, and not to push, not to elbow, but to be good, and kindly and careful, so that all may get along. "Let those who have no carriages make way for those who have;" "Let those who have no houses pay well to those who have;" "Let those who have no bread accept from those who have;" "Let none think of looking beyond the city walls, for beyond are other men's domains, never to be coveted."

I have recently heard three distinguished ministers of the gospel speak on the social question. Each admitted a social question: the poor are many, overworked, underpaid, and ignorant, and when unemployed they tramp and starve; at the same time, as the uneducated, they are restricted in vision, unreasonably discontented, and disinclined to lean on the true staff and comforter, religion. These ministers believe in one panacea for social ills—the spirit of Christ. This spirit manifests itself in love, peace, brotherhood, in men doing good for one another. On this theme the ministers expatiated at length eloquently, fer-

vently, beautifully. They delivered the message the Church has to offer. As I listened, I could entertain no doubt of their sincerity. On each occasion I was touched, and on coming out of church I heard, on one side and another, words of praise for the speaker's good intentions and the elevated character of his sentiments.

Ruminating on these three sermons, I have drifted to a conclusion which is a paradox. It is, that the masses are sufficiently infused with the spirit of Christ—the love of fair play,—to render our society better. What is really needed is not the disposition to concede equal rights, or even to accommodate one another at some sacrifice. All about us are men doing for others, freely giving time, money, help, in various forms. The wage-earners are ceaseless in performing good work for their own class. No need to exhort them to do for their families, their shopmates, their fellow-craftsmen; for every benefit society, labor union, or coöperative association testifies, not only to a pervading spirit of proper self-interest, but to work done by officers and members without hope of pay. No; the spirit of Christ often animates almost every human being we meet. What man lack is, not sentiment, but a clearer vision, an enlightened perception of what constitutes justice. They need the revelation afforded by a commanding point of view.

To drop figurative language: Wherein the masses are at fault is, not moral development, but mental development. Only a few years ago, smart men with money, and smart men without money, saw the chances

lying in this Western country for getting wealth through legally manipulating other men's labor and legally forestalling the proceeds of other men's labor. That this is a system of theft the masses fail to see.

What, in particular, speculators saw years ago was, opportunity to possess themselves of monopolies—legal privileges granted by law. What the masses must see is, the necessity for withdrawing such privileges from the men who enjoy them. Every citizen must have his full opportunity.

The way out? Well; the masses are the majority. When the majority becomes awakened and instructed, it will be fair to itself. In production of wealth, fairness to the majority must become fairness to all. In questions of government, we can but bow to the sense of the majority; let the majority, then, speak directly on each and every issue. The judgment so pronounced will move society progressively toward justice. For precisely as during the last few years not a few among the masses have perceived the great facts of monopoly as facts, and have been aiding in movements of reform thought in their class, so when their verdict is asked will the masses, moved by self-protection and a desire for fair dealing, utter the verdict of the highest jury on earth. As time instructs men in social causes and effects, that verdict, I doubt not, will in the main be in accordance with the dictum: "Thou shalt not steal."

Sacramento, April, 1894.—Here's that old notebook of mine. I haven't looked at in years. I'll jot down a line, to bring events up to date.

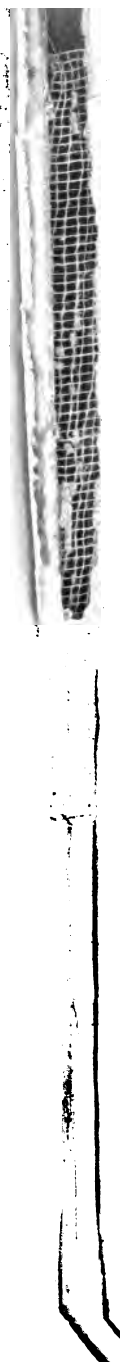
Yes, I did go back to work—actual work—labor, with my coat off. And then, I repented? Yes; I was sorry I had to work.

But it didn't last long. Men themselves failures croak about the way upward being closed to merit, even in California. Fudge! Good men can still do well here. The very outcry against railroad and land monopoly indicated to me my opportunity. The monopolists, I argued, can't do all their own work. There must be chances to nestle in among them somehow. Having the will, I found the way.

Monopoly in California employs much talent—talent representing the bar, the press, the publicist—not to mention other professions.

Not long after my failure I became ostensible proprietor of a country newspaper. I have managed it since. It is a newsy paper, straight in every particular except on monopoly questions. With these its course is subject to guidance by certain millionaires. Otherwise, my pages are moral and edifying.

I and my family live well. I am a leading citizen in my town. I am in the legislature. I have passes on every railroad in the State. I amuse myself with the passing show. I am as happy as my neighbors. Good society dines with me and invites me to its receptions. It wouldn't if I worked at my trade.



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